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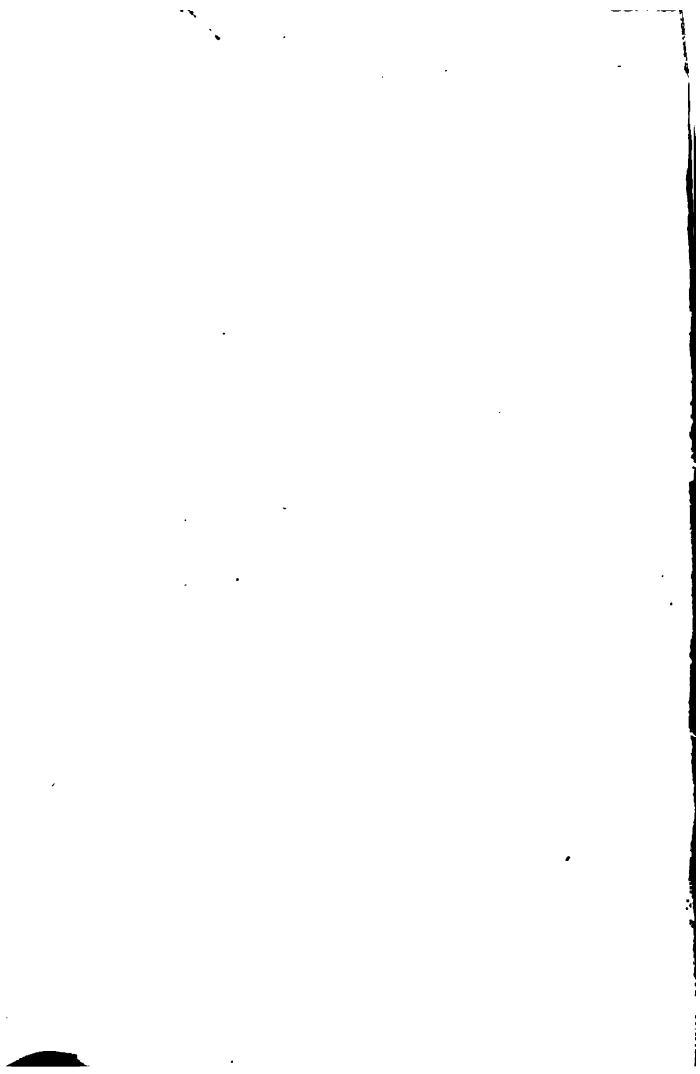
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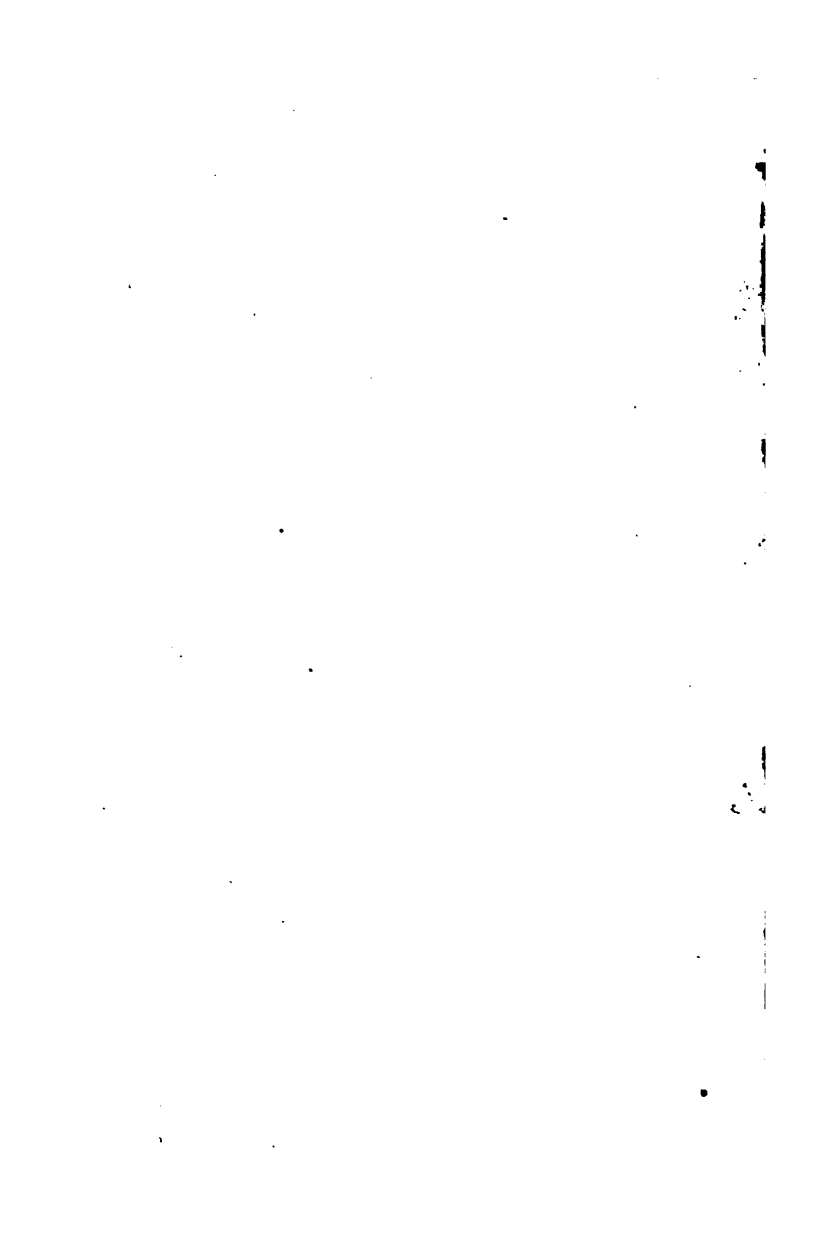
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THE
CHARACTER AND PROSPECTS
OF
THE CHURCH OF ROME :

IN TWO DISCOURSES.

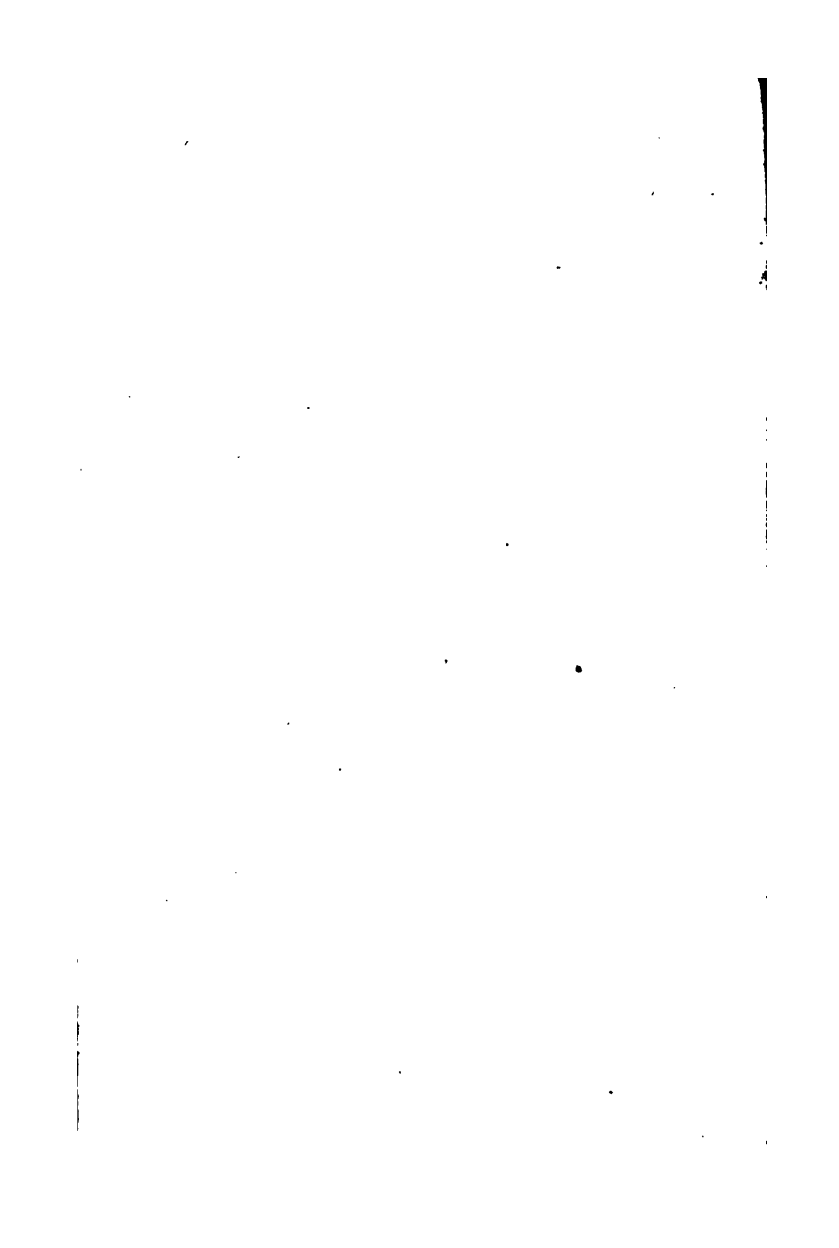
BY THE
REV. WILLIAM MACKRAY, A.M.
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7-10-1912

TO
THE CONGREGATION IN SPITAL SQUARE,
THESE TWO DISCOURSES
ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,
AS A TESTIMONY OF THE AUTHOR'S REGARD,
AND OF HIS WISHES
FOR
THEIR PRESENT AND FUTURE WELFARE.



These Discourses were delivered by the Author to his Congregation some time ago. The two-fold object which he had in view in preaching them, is stated in the Introduction; and if they shall now be made, in any degree, the means of accomplishing that object in a wider sphere, the design of their publication will be realized.

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DISCOURSE I.

REV. XVIII. 21—24.

And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be found no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee: And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

I am discoursing to you, at this time, from these words, there are two objects which I have particularly in view:—

I. I wish to have my hearers deeply convinced of the real character of Popery. This, it is obvious to every person of discernment, is greatly lost sight of by multitudes of Protestants in present times. We have long dwelt amid the light and the blissful privileges of the Reformation, and have never beheld, in its unveiled deformity, the system beneath which, for hundreds of years, our forefathers groaned. In consequence of

this, utter ignorance of the real character of Popery widely prevails; whilst, in recent discussions that have taken place on this subject, infidel men, ignorant and reckless, in order to promote their favourite designs, have declaimed about the Catholic faith, as merely one of the various forms of Christianity that exist, equally harmless, and equally entitled as the others to the benevolent opinion of mankind.

It is, unquestionably, the duty of the ministers of religion, as they value the interests of the immortal souls that are under their care, to furnish their people with an antidote to these false and pernicious sentiments—to exhibit before them, in its native deformity, the God-dishonouring, and soul-ruining character of the Antichristian faith—and thus to warn them against giving it their countenance, and enable them, with meekness, to give to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in them.

The system of the Papal Church is full of dishonour towards God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and full of peril to the temporal and spiritual welfare of mankind: and, surely, that servant of the Lord Jesus does ill discharge his obligations to his divine Master, who, when this enemy threatens to “come in like a flood,” is not careful to “lift up,” in his place, “a standard against him!” “Son of man,” says our Lord to each of his servants, “I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.”

II. I wish to direct the attention of the people of God to that approaching overthrow of the Antichristian power, the consideration of which is greatly adapted to cheer and encourage them, amid the increase and advancement which its interests are experiencing in present times. I am sure, that the cause of Popery has never seemed so prosperous, since the era of the Reformation, as it presently does;—that its deluded adherents have never so vigorously and successfully plied their proselytizing work as within the last thirty years;—and that the great body of men in the Protestant world were never so insensible, as at present, of the value of those great privileges, which were not secured to them, but by the contentings and the blood of their martyred fathers of other days. In all this, enlightened, and conscientious, and faithful Christians cannot but perceive ground of deep and lasting regret: for they did not, surely, anticipate that the deadly wound of the beast would be so greatly healed, or that the crumbling battlements of Antichristian Rome would, in these latter days, be so signally repaired; and, amid the dark and threatening aspect of divine Providence, they cannot but be led anxiously to ask—What shall be the end of these things?—How long shall this “mystery of iniquity,” which opposes Christ, and makes merchandise of souls, have strength, and prosper, and destroy in the earth?—How long shall this great “apostacy” from the Christian faith dishonour God, and ruin souls, and oppress the Church, and stand up as a barrier in

the way of the gathering of Jews and Gentiles into one harmonious and glorious body?—Is the Redeemer unmindful of his Church? or for her sins, and the sins of the world, hath he determined to lengthen out the time of Zion's captivity?

Now, amid the darkness of Providence, the people of Christ should commune with his promises. From all that is adverse in the present experience of the Church, they should look forward to her coming joys. And when the foes of Zion obtain partial enlargements, it is the duty and the privilege of her friends to anticipate the disastrous and final overthrow which "the Lord of Hosts hath purposed" concerning them.

The event announced in my text, is the most joyful which the Church of Christ has been taught to expect in this world. It will be a signal manifestation of her Redeemer's glory,—the ruin of her greatest adversary,—the fulfilment of a long series of sublime predictions,—in short, it will be the commencement of the most splendid and blissful era in her militant history;—for we learn from Holy Scripture, that the destruction of the Antichristian power will be immediately followed by the conversion of long-outcast Israel, the overthrow of Mahomedan imposture, and the extension and the triumph of the gospel over all the earth for a thousand years.

To this event, my friends, I purpose to direct your consideration; and, amid the present awful prevalence of Popery and popish-infidelity abroad, the increased strength which the Antichristian interest is

obtaining in our own beloved land, and the countenance which, in violation of divine injunctions, and of our own solemn, national obligations, is given to it by Protestants of all ranks,—amid all this, it cannot but be consoling and reviving to every faithful lover of the Redeemer's interest and glory, to contemplate Antichrist foredoomed of God, and to anticipate the splendid manifestation which Jesus will give of his power and grace, when he "shall consume that Wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming."

The words of my text, you are aware, do not refer to Babylon of the *ancient* world; for, long before the time when the visions of the Apocalypse were given to the beloved disciple, that great city, "the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," had been given into the hands of the spoiler, and "swept with the besom" of fearful destruction. Babylon, in this passage, is a symbolical term, representing a great religious system, which, was to exist in New Testament times, under the Christian name, and in which a most striking resemblance to ancient Babylon would be perceived. This system is spoken of in the Apocalypse under various names. It is described as "the mystery of iniquity," "the mother of abominations," "Sodom," "Egypt;" and is compared to a wild, devouring beast, having seven heads and ten horns. It was predicted of this great system, that it would rise to signal power—would have the world wondering after it—would exalt itself

in opposition to God—would delude mankind, and make merchandise of souls—would make war on the saints of the Most High—and would endure for 1260 years. All these particulars have been realized only in the corrupt and persecuting Church of Rome. Except the Papacy, no false system, under the Christian name, has endured a thousand years. No other system comprehends such a multitude of abominations. No other system has so fearfully persecuted the Church of Christ. In short, no other system ever attained such extension, or was surrounded with so much of the pomp and grandeur of the earth.

Babylon is the symbol under which this great system of corruption is represented in my text; and, acquainted as we are with the character of ancient Babylon, we can be at no loss to perceive the reason of the application of this name to the Papal Church. All those features of wickedness, that distinguished the character of the profligate metropolis of the East, are found, in still more awful perfection, in her anti-type of the West. Pride of secular magnificence, the lust of universal dominion, the worship of unnumbered idols, unbounded corruption of manners, and unrelenting oppression of the Church of God,—these are the things for which great Babylon of the ancient world was remarkable:—And who, that is acquainted with the history of the Papal Church, knows not, that, in *mystical* Babylon, an awful re-exhibition has been given of them all. She has pressed into her service the grandeur of this world. Over all that is called God has she aspired to reign. Unnumbered

are the images and the relics, before which her disciples fall down in humble adoration. Her doctrines were the means of spreading immorality over the world; and, for many generations did she, by her sanguinary persecutions, wear out the saints of the Most High. Is she not, therefore, worthily called *Babylon the great*?

Without confining myself, in the subsequent Discourses, to the analogy between ancient Babylon and the Papal Church, I design—

IN THE FIRST PLACE, TO LAY BEFORE YOU, IN SOME GENERAL REMARKS, THE CHARACTER OF THE LATTER; AND, SECONDLY, TO CONTEMPLATE HER PROSPECTS AS DELINEATED IN MY TEXT.

The genuine CHARACTER of the Papal system seems, by a multitude of Protestants, to be utterly lost sight of. Our fathers, who emerged from the darkness and the delusions of Popery, knew it well, and left their convictions respecting it on record, for the warning of their posterity. But their sentiments on this subject multitudes among us have now learned to hold in utter contempt: and that great corruption of Christianity—that mighty spiritual usurpation, whose disastrous tendency was displayed, during a thousand years, in the ignorance, degradation, and misery of mankind, is now regarded, not merely as a tolerable and harmless thing, but, in many instances, as equally entitled to our affection and our esteem, with the system of truth and liberty by which, in our favoured land, it has been displaced.

When John beheld Mystical Babylon, in all the splendour of her meretricious array, surrounded by adoring multitudes, and sitting Empress among the nations, he "wondered with great admiration." But, my brethren, we have, if possible, even more cause for wonder, when we behold mystical Babylon, after she has been stripped of her treacherous array, and exhibited before the eyes of mankind, in all her deformity, and perfidy, and destructive influence on communities, and on the souls of men,—still esteemed and honoured by mankind, and even elevated to power, and put into a condition to gain other subjects, and to accomplish wider and more aggravated ruin! I profess, I cannot but regard all this as deep infatuation on the part of those who have been emancipated from her power; and I cannot but express my apprehension, that this infatuation will be followed with disastrous consequences:—At all events, I am convinced, that he studies the good of his country, and of the souls of his fellow-men, who seeks to impress their minds with abhorrence of that divinely doomed system which is altogether hostile to both.

I. THE DOCTRINES OF THE PAPAL CHURCH ARE AN UTTER CORRUPTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

The two grand expedients which Satan has employed in order, if possible, to accomplish the overthrow of the Church, have been the introduction of error, and the stirring up of persecution;—and, although the latter is the most dreadful and appalling, the for-

mer has been the most fatally successful. Amid the fires of persecution, the Church has stood forth like gold in the furnace of the refiner; but the secret workings of error have withered her beauty, and given cause to inscribe on all her dwelling places—"Ichabod"—the glory is departed.

Even in the early days of the Church, when a century had not yet passed over her, "the mystery of iniquity" was at work. The invisible adversary of the Church was sowing his tares, was secretly introducing errors and delusions, and laying the basis of that mighty system of abominations which was, ere long, to gain the ascendancy, and to spread its desolating influence over the Christian world. "The mystery of iniquity" was working, even in those early times—in the pride and ambition that distinguished many who professed to be Christians—in the schisms that began to mar the loveliness of the Church—in the contentions that began to take place among Christian teachers—and, in short, in those errors respecting the worship of angels, the observation of holidays, the distinction of meats, and the ground of a sinner's acceptance with God, which, in many parts of the Church, began to prevail. These were the beginnings of Antichrist—the melancholy presages of that night of ignorance, superstition, and idolatry, which was soon to close over what would still continue to be called "the Church of Christ."

At length, "the great Apostacy" assumed its proper character. The Pagan empire of Rome, which hin-

dered the appearance of the "Man of Sin," being removed out of the way, he began to be fully revealed ; and many of the errors of preceding times were methodized in the Roman Church, and settled down into an established system. Corruption after corruption was introduced—one holy institution of Christianity after another was prostituted and debased—one feature of her spiritual comeliness after another was obscured and destroyed, till, 600 years after Christ, the Redeemer's high prerogative, as Head of the Church, was usurped ; an impious mortal received the title of Universal Bishop, and, "sitting in the temple of God, and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," gave sanction and permanence to every encroachment that had been made on the purity of the Church, and to every dishonour that had been done to her Head.

Your time would fail me, if I were to attempt to give more than a faint outline of the errors of this unholy system, and of the entire opposition that there is between it and genuine Christianity. For there is scarcely one doctrine of our blessed faith which it has not corrupted ; there is not one of its sacred institutions which it has not degraded ; there is not one part of its sublime worship which it has not profaned.

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve"—is the dictate of Christianity ; but the Papal Church offers adoration and prayers to saints, angels, and, particularly, to the mother of our Lord, and pays honours, nothing short of divine, to

the crucifix, and the most paltry relics of departed saints.

The leading doctrine in the Christian system is the existence and glorious sufficiency of the mediation of Jesus Christ ; but the Church of Rome has dishonoured the *One Mediator*, by associating with him, in the discharge of this exalted office, angels, and all the multitude of departed saints.

Christianity proclaims the one sacrifice of Christ to be the great atonement, the only propitiation for sin, and that, being infinitely precious, it needs never to be repeated ; but the Church of Rome affirms that this sacrifice *does* need to be repeated, and *is* repeated in the celebration of the mass, which service she declares to be the offering up of a "true propitiatory sacrifice, not merely for the living, but also for the dead."

Christianity proclaims to guilty men pardon of sin and acceptance before God, *freely* through the righteousness of the Redeemer, received by faith ; but the Papal Church introduces into the ground of a sinner's justification, penances, satisfactions, indulgences, and, especially, the merit of good works ; and her last general council declares those *to be accursed*, who maintain, that justifying faith is nothing else than a trust in the divine mercy, manifested to sinners through Jesus Christ.

Christianity declares that holiness of heart and life, proceeding from the regenerating and purifying in-

fluence of the Spirit of God, is indispensably necessary to prepare the soul for admission into the heavenly kingdom ; but, according to the Church of Rome, baptism is regeneration ; penance, confession, and the mass, are the sanctification of the life ; and the sacrament of extreme unction infallibly secures introduction into heaven.

The supreme headship of our Redeemer, in and over his Church, is a prominent doctrine in the Christian system ; but, under the Papacy, the prerogatives of the King of Zion are usurped by the Pope.

Christianity declares that the whole efficacy of divine ordinances is from God ; that " Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase ;" but the Popish system, in a variety of instances, affirms that the success of divine institutions depends on the intention of their administrator, and the pious dispositions of those who enjoy them.

In short, it is the doctrine of Christianity, that the souls of men, on their departure from the body, return to Him from whom they came, and are either secured in the happiness of his blissful presence, or subjected to everlasting condemnation—thus solemnly teaching the absolute need of faith, repentance, and true religion in the *present* life ; but, under the Papacy, this momentous doctrine has given place to the fanciful and unscriptural notion of an intermediate state, or purgatory, in which the souls of the faithful, who have passed out of this world with unexpiat-

ed sin, undergo a process of tormenting purification, and from which they are at length delivered through the purchased prayers and intercessions of the priest ; thus rendering it a matter of comparative indifference, whether religion has been made the subject of serious regard before death or not !

These are a few out of a multitude of particulars that might be mentioned, exhibiting the entire opposition that there is between the leading doctrines of Christianity and those of the Papacy, and the awful corruption to which Christian truth has been subjected, even in those instances in which something like the shadow of it has been retained. And if, from the Doctrines, we were to pass to the Institutions of Christianity, we would find that there is scarcely one of them that has not experienced the unhallowed and defiling touch of this "mother of abominations."—Where, in the grand record of our holy institutions, will you find authority for dispensing ordinances in an unknown tongue, for devoting unbaptised persons to everlasting perdition, for the absurdity of transubstantiation, for the blasphemous mass—a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, for withholding the symbol of the blood of Christ from the people in the holy communion, for the worshipping of angels and departed saints, for offering up prayers on behalf of the dead ; in short, for accounting confirmation, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony, to be sacraments—affirming that they have power to confer grace, and devoting to an everlasting curse

those by whom they are denied?*" Are these the institutions of genuine Christianity? No, my brethren; these are *corruptions* of Christianity, by which its simplicity is perverted, its sublimity debased, its glory trampled in the dust. These are corruptions, by which the religion of the blessed Saviour is degraded down to the level of Pagan superstition, and the house of God converted into a synagogue of Satan.

II. THE WORSHIP OF THE PAPAL CHURCH IS IDOLATRY.

This is a solemn and awful charge;—if it is made in consistency with truth, it excludes the community, respecting which it is affirmed, from all right to lay claim to the character of a Church of Christ. Alas! it is a charge, than which there is not one more easily substantiated.

Idolatry is the giving that adoration and worship to creatures which belongs to the true God, the Creator of all things. It is expressly forbidden in the first commandment—"Thou shalt have no other Gods before me;" and still more expressly in the second—

* The Council of Trent, (Sess. 7. Can. 1.) decreed in the following terms—"If any one saith that the sacraments of the new law were not all appointed by Jesus Christ our Lord or that they are more or fewer than *seven*, namely—Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony, or that any one of these is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be ANATHEMA."

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” Who sees not that this is a most unambiguous prohibition? Who feels not that its terms are most awful and alarming, and that the guilt of those must be fearful, by whom it is violated? Who could have expected that a Church professing to venerate the authority of God, and to yield obedience to his blessed word, would have dared its infringement? Yet is most direct and awful violation of this part of the divine law, one of the striking features in the character of the Antichristian Church. Images of angels and departed saints, and of the divine Saviour, and even of Him, whom no eye hath seen, or can see, who is the King eternal, immortal, and invisible,* have been used in all ages of the Papacy, and *are* used by her even unto this day. Before these images her votaries prostrate themselves—

* “I myself,” says Mr Cunningham, author of an excellent work on the apostacy of the Church of Rome, “saw a picture of this kind, (of God the Father) in one of the churches of Antwerp, about twenty-five years ago; and the existence of such abominations is acknowledged in an abridgement of sacred history, by L’Abbe Fleury, which is in my possession. “These images,” says he, “which represent the divine persons, are derived from the sacred scripture. God hath, not unfrequently, appeared to his prophets under the form of a venerable old man.”

to them they pray—to them they give divine homage, and from them they implore blessings which only God can bestow. If ever there was such a thing as idolatry in the world, it is this!

In vain is it asserted by the defenders of the Church of Rome, that, in adoring images of the Saviour and of God, they employ them merely as the *medium* of worship; that the honour which they give is not intended for the image, but for the great Being whom it represents. Even in this case, the practice is still gross idolatry—a flagrant violation not only of the whole spirit, but also of the very letter of the second commandment. Are not “the *making* of any graven image,” and “the *bowing* down before it,” expressly prohibited? And to illustrate the import of the prohibition, is there not in the Holy Scripture this solemn caution?—“Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure; the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, the likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth; and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them and serve them,

which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven."*

It is not necessary, in order to constitute idolatry, that the object before which adoration is given, be supposed to be really God. In the sight of Jehovah, those are truly idolaters, who present, before a *creature*, the homage which is due to "the living and true God." When Aaron and the children of Israel made the golden calf in the wilderness, and fell down before it, and worshipped, they intended it merely as a *representation* of the God who had "brought them up out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage." Nevertheless, in the sight of God they were guilty of idolatry, and their "turning aside from the way which he had commanded them," was followed by the fearful tokens of his displeasure. In like manner, amid all the idolatry with which the Jews were chargeable in the subsequent periods of their history, they were never guilty of totally rejecting the true God. They introduced images—the idols of the surrounding nations—into their worship; but they intended them simply as emblems of their own God, and as the medium through which they presented to him their adoration and their praise. Yet, in the sight of God, this was idolatry. For this they were challenged, threatened, punished. For this their ten tribes were devoted to final rejection. For this Judah was given up to desolation and captivity during seventy

* Deut. iv. 15. 19.

years. And for this, if she had not timeously repented of her iniquity, she would, even then, have been cast finally away. Now, this is precisely the idolatry that, even according to the admission of her own advocates, exists in the Church of Rome. She uses images as emblems of the object of worship, in order, as she pretends, to enliven the devotions, and excite the affections of the worshippers. But this is just what Israel did. This is the very idolatry which was arraigned and condemned by her prophets as apostasy and rebellion, and for which she was again and again visited with the awful judgments of the Most High.

Equally frivolous and vain is the argument by which the defenders of the Papacy endeavour to vindicate the worship of *saints* and *angels*, as practised in the Church of Rome. It is expressly affirmed in her doctrines, "that the veneration and invocation of angels and of saints are acts lawful and advantageous;"* but it is asserted that, in these acts, there is nothing that can derogate from the glory of God, or be injurious to the character of Christ as Mediator;—in short, that the worship which is given them is of an inferior and subordinate kind. But where, in holy

* The last council of the Church of Rome (Sess. 23) decreed—"That it is good and profitable to invoke the saints, and to fly to their prayers for obtaining blessings from God; and that those who deny that the saints are to be invoked think impiously, and are accursed."

scripture, is there the slightest notice of such a distinction as this? Are we not solemnly assured, that the object of worship is but ONE, and that He will not divide his glory with another, or his praise with graven images? Is not the idea of subordinate worship obviously and utterly condemned in these emphatic words of our Saviour—"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve?" And is there not recorded in "the Revelation" the solemn refusal of an angel to take any part of the homage which the raptured apostle was about to pay to him—"And I John saw these things and heard them; and when I had heard and seen, I fell down before the feet of the angel, which showed me these things. Then said he unto me, see thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book:—WORSHIP GOD!"*

But why should I spend time in shewing that there is no such thing as inferior or subordinate worship recognised, or allowed, in the word of God? Is it really the case, that the worship which is given to saints and angels, by the Church of Rome, is of an inferior and subordinate kind? It is not. In the language which she employs concerning them,—in the prayers, the thanksgivings, the vows, which she offers up to them,—and, indeed, in her whole conduct towards them, there are obviously involved the homage

* Rev. xxii. 8. 9.

and the worship which are due only to "the living and true God." Is it not the fact, that to them churches are consecrated, altars erected, and days appropriated as seasons of peculiar worship? In prayers addressed to them, are not those blessings supplicated, which it is the high prerogative of God alone to bestow? * Is it not expressly decreed by the Council of Trent, that not merely *vocal*, but *mental* prayers are to be offered up to departed saints—a practice which virtually ascribes to them the knowledge of the heart? In short, are not confessions of iniquity, vows of

* In the Roman Breviary, corrected and published by the decree of the Council of Trent, the Virgin Mary is invoked "for strength against enemies," and, in the hymn used in her Office, she is not only called the "gate of heaven," but entreated "to loosen the bonds of the guilty," "to give light to the blind," "to drive away our evils, to obtain good things for us," and "to show herself to be a mother,"—that is, (as the Mass Book of Paris, 1634, interprets it,) "in right of a mother, to *command* her son!" In like manner, Saint Peter is entreated, by the power given to him, "to hear their prayers, to untie the bonds of their iniquity, and to open the gates of heaven," Saint Andrew is supplicated for "patience to bear cheerfully the Cross of Christ;" Saint Francis, for "deliverance from the danger and bondage of sin;" Saint Bridget, for "wisdom against the snares of the world;" Saint Nicholas, for "courage against the assaults of the Devil;" Saint Agnes, for "the chiefest of graces, charity;" and all the Apostles are entreated "to absolve them from their sins," "by their command, to heal all their spiritual maladies," and "to increase their virtues."—See "*Preservative against Popery.*" Vol. ii. Tit. vi. p. 159.

service, and thanksgivings for mercies, presented before them? Every one, at all acquainted with the decrees and public formularies of the Church of Rome, is aware, that all these are unquestionable facts? And are not all these practices solemn acts of religious worship? If they are not, I should like to be told what religious worship really is. Acts of worship they undoubtedly are; most dishonouring to God,—for they give the glory to creatures which belongs to Him, and most vain and ineffectual on the part of them who present them,—for angels and saints have no knowledge of our various necessities, and although they had, they could not impart the blessings which we need. To do this is the high prerogative of the Lord our God.—“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

If I were to call your attention, especially, to the language and conduct of the Papal Church, in reference to Mary, the mother of our Lord, I am sure that I would shock you with the proofs of her awful idolatry. She has not deemed it enough, to place the Virgin Mary at the head of canonized saints, and to recognise her as an object of adoration and prayer, along with the host of her sainted sisters and brethren; but, in addressing her, she employs language supremely impious and blasphemous,* and, in her

* In proof of this, I need only quote some of the expressions which are found in “A Liturgy, for the use of all Christians, in great Britain and Ireland,” which was edited

liturgies, ascribes to her more solemn and more frequent worship, than to "the only, living, and true God." It is not necessary, however, and to you, I am sure, it is not pleasant, that I should enlarge on these things; and, therefore, I conclude the illustra-

by the Rev. P. Gandolphy—a Romish priest of eminence—and printed in London in the year 1812. "We fly to thy patronage, *O holy Mother of God*; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us from all danger, O, ever glorious and blessed Virgin!" This prayer, Mr Cunningham properly remarks, is idolatry of the highest kind. It is an address to a creature, in terms suited only to the eternal majesty of God. In the liturgy referred to, among other blasphemous and idolatrous titles which are given her, she is called—"Holy Mother of God," "Mother of divine grace," "Mother of our Creator," "Virgin most merciful," "Seat of Wisdom," "Cause of our Joy," "Mystical Rose," "Tower of David," "Ark of the Covenant," "Gate of Heaven," "Morning Star," "Refuge of Sinners," "Comforter of the Afflicted," "Queen of Angels," "Queen of Saints"; and texts of scripture are placed opposite each of these titles, as authorities for the language employed. Now, first of all, in these prayers there is gross idolatry,—a giving of the worship of the true God to a creature. In addition to this, there is the blasphemous ascription of titles which belong only to God, and to our Redeemer,—such as "Refuge of Sinners," "Morning Star," "Ark of the Covenant," &c. to a mere creature, who was once sinful, and needed salvation, even as others. And then there is the dreadful perversion of the Holy Scriptures in order to support and justify the idolatrous worship of the creature. For example, Josh. iii. 8. is produced as autho-

tion of this particular, with one additional remark—that, in the idolatry of the Church of Rome, there is, in many instances, something eminently revolting and degrading to a rational mind. What is the solemn adoration of “the host?”—the tenfold bowing, even to the ground, before a *wafel*, as if it were a God? What is the venerating of the image of the Cross, and addressing it in language of solemn invocation? And, in short, what is the holding paltry relics of departed men in admiration,—ascribing to them marvellous efficacy,—and even offering to them religious homage? What is all this, but idolatry,—debasement to man as a rational being, and unspeakably criminal and awful in a Church possessing a divine revelation, and professing to be the only true and infallible Church of the living God? With what emphasis may the words of the Most High, respecting the idolatry of his ancient people, be applied to this unhallowed system—“Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? But my people have changed their glory

ry for giving to the Virgin the appellation of “Ark of the Covenant;”—“When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the Priests, the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.” The ark of the covenant was a type of our blessed Redeemer, who is the true *propitiatory*; but here it is applied to the Virgin Mary, and is advanced as a proof that she is entitled to religious homage! And all this by a Church that pretends to be the infallible interpreter of the scripture, and the sole judge of its meaning!

for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be ye horribly afraid.”*

III. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PAPAL CHURCH ARE SANGUINARY AND IMMORAL.

I am not ignorant that the fierce, intolerant, and sanguinary character which was believed to be peculiar to the Antichristian system has, of late times, been denied by her interested disciples, and her insidious or mistaken friends. But the denial is made in the face of divine prophecy, and the recorded transactions of a thousand years. In holy Scripture, “the beast” is described as “speaking great things, and blasphemies,” “making war on the people of the Most High, and wearing them out,” and “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;” and, in the concluding words of my text. it is said of mystical Babylon, that, when the apocalyptic angel, in vision, announced her final overthrow, there “was found in her the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” Alas! these inspired descriptions have been fearfully realized in the character and conduct of the Church of Rome. It is true, *Protestants* have persecuted; but they have done so in opposition to their principles. Their conduct was condemned by the whole spirit and the very letter of the system which they had espoused. The Papal Church, on the

* See Appendix, No. I.

contrary, has persecuted from principle. In the decrees of her councils, the bulls of her pontiffs, and the recorded sentiments of her most celebrated writers, intolerance is avowed, persecution is sanctioned. And it is not in some solitary instances, or in a few places, that her sanguinary spirit has been displayed. It has been exhibited in every nation of Christendom, and in every age since the Bishop of Rome ascended the Papal throne.

I have no design at present to act the part of a martyrologist;—I am not going to shock your feelings, by calling up to your remembrance the scenes of past times, which are everlasting proofs of the relentless spirit of Popery,—the obligations which she has violated—the perfidy which she has sanctioned—the persecutions she has raised—the massacres she has excited and applauded—and the melancholy triumphs she has gained by her crusades, and her inquisitions, over the cause of righteousness and truth. But I do affirm that these scenes remain portrayed on the historian's faithful page, monuments of her character, which will never cease to draw forth against her, as an atrocious system, the hatred and indignation of mankind.

I will be told, indeed, by the apologists of the Church of Rome, who wish to get her again into favour with Protestants, that she is now entirely changed,—that all the fierceness and intolerance of former days, are passed away from her for ever. And we

grant, and rejoice that, in some respects, she is changed. She is not what she was before the days of the Reformation. Her head does not now reign over the kings of the earth. She cannot now command the armies of the nations to engage in the subjugation of heretical states. She cannot, by her bulls, fill kingdoms with alarm. She sees not the world prostrate before her; nor can she at pleasure, as in days of old, fill her coffers with its wealth.—In these respects—thanks, under God, to the Reformation, and to the light which it has spread abroad among mankind—she is changed. But what then? All this is a mere change of external circumstances—of power, wealth, and glory. Is the *spirit* of the system changed? Has its intrinsic character undergone any alteration? Would that it had! Would that all its wickedness had passed away from the Papacy, and that, through the converting grace of God, it had become a regenerated, a peaceful, and a holy system! Alas! this is not the case. Not one fact can be adduced to show that this is the case. It is true, the Church of Rome is not at this moment displaying her intolerant character, in such acts of atrocious outrage, as when she sent forth an exterminating warfare into the peaceful vallies of the Waldenses, or, as when she plotted the Bartholomew-massacre, and lighted up the martyring fires of Smithfield! But is this an evidence that her doctrines, her spirit, and her character are changed? Just as strong an evidence of

this, as the harmlessness of the fettered tiger is an evidence that his native fierceness is no more ! Individuals and societies in her communion have deprecated the charge of intolerance. But the charge is not preferred against *individuals*,—it has respect to the Papacy as a system ;—and we maintain that, considered in this view, she has undergone *no* change,—that, at this moment, she looks down with the same air of malignant intolerance on all who belong not to her communion, as she did in the times of darkness before the Reformation. At this very day, does she not arrogate to herself the character of *THE CHURCH*, out of which there is no salvation ? Is it not an unquestionable fact, that she pronounces, every year, a solemn excommunication on all who are not within her pale ? Is not the whole mass of her exclusive and intolerant dogmas still in existence and in force,—not only unrepealed, even in a single instance, but declared by the last of her general councils, to be perpetual ? In truth, it is idle to talk of the Papacy *changing*. She *cannot* change. If, in any one point, she were to repudiate the articles of her ancient belief, her boasted *infallibility*—the corner-stone of her system—would be destroyed, and the spell, by which her votaries are bound, would be broken for ever.

It is worthy of notice, too, that, notwithstanding the severe controul to which the Papacy has been subjected, since the period of the Reformation, evidences have not been wanting, even in recent times, of her arrogant and intolerant spirit, and of the line of con-

duct she would pursue, if the power which she wielded in days of old were again at her command. In proof of this, I might remind you of the grievous oppressions and persecutions with which, on account of their religion, the Protestants of France were visited during the greater part of the 18th century. I might remind you of the tremendous burst of Popish feeling which took place on the recent restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France. I might tell you of the express declaration of a late Pontiff, to the King of the Netherlands, "that the toleration of other religions is incompatible with the interests of the Church of Rome." I might appeal to the late restoration of the iniquitous and formidable order of the Jesuits, whose suppression had been formerly obtained only in compliance with the indignant voice of the whole Christian world. I might appeal to various authorized works of Popish writers which have recently appeared—particularly the work of a Mr Gandolphy—approved by the highest authorities at Rome—in which the most obnoxious and Antichristian tenets of the Roman Church are introduced and defended. In short, I might quote to you "the Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XII." addressed only three years ago, to the clergy of the Pontifical Church, in which all the ancient doctrines of Popery are recognized, and in which it is expressly affirmed, that the power of the civil magistrate should come to the aid of the priesthood, in their efforts to suppress Bible

Societies, and to propagate the doctrines of the orthodox creed!"

But why should I dwell on these things? Is it really a matter of doubt, whether or not the spirit and temper of the Papacy shall, in any period of its history, undergo a beneficial change? I cannot conceive, for my own part, how, in the mind of an intelligent Christian, any such doubt can possibly exist. Are we not in possession of "a sure Word of Prophecy," which embraces, in its ample and varied details, every particular respecting the character and future destiny of this great adversary of the Church of Christ? And, although it is true, that some of the more minute parts of the prophecies respecting Antichrist are obscure, and will probably never be fully understood, until the predicted events shall have taken place, is it not abundantly obvious, from the announcements of revelation, that this great foe of the Saviour's kingdom will retain its distinctive character to the very last, and that there is not the slightest ground to anticipate its reformation? No, my brethren, whether you contemplate the visions of Daniel respecting "the little horn" of "the fourth beast," or the prophecy of Paul concerning "The Man of Sin," or the Apocalyptic visions respecting mystical "Babylon," you will not find so much as one symbol, or one announcement, to encourage hope in reference to the Church of Rome. It will be only

with its existence, that the temper and character of Popery will cease. "The little horn," we are expressly assured, will *continue* "to speak great words against the Most High," and to "make war against" and "wear out the Saints," *until* "his dominion shall be consumed and destroyed;"* the "Man of Sin"—the "lawless one"—will *continue* to "oppose, and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that worshipped," and to maintain his interest in the world "with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish," *until* he shall be "consumed with the spirit of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming;"† and mystical "Babylon" will go on, "full of names of blasphemy," polluting the earth with "her abominations," and "drunken with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus," *until* she perish, like a millstone sunk in the flood, to rise no more.‡ These are the announcements of holy writ; and, my brethren, although infidel men may scorn its authority in their speculations on this subject, it is impossible for us, who believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, and who submit our understandings to its infallible guidance,—it is impossible for *us* to lend our ears, even for a moment, to the syren song that Popery is changed.

* Dan vii. 21—26. † 2 Thess. ii. 8—10.
 Rev. xviii. 1—3. 21. 23. 24. and xix. 1—3.

Let none impute to me the want of *charity* because I make these remarks. I speak of the *system* of Popery, not of the men who support it. Towards *them* my feelings and wishes are those of compassion and benevolence. My heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be converted from the error of their way, and brought into the light and the liberty of the sons of God. But towards *it* I feel nothing but hatred and indignation, because I regard it as the scourge of the Church, the adversary of Christ, and the foe of all peace and happiness among mankind. And that person must have loose notions of charity indeed, who can regard it as *uncharitable* to represent an idolatrous and wicked system, in the colours in which it is represented in the word of God!

BUT I said, moreover, that the doctrines of the church of Rome are, in many instances, grossly **IMMORAL** in their tendency. This, indeed, follows as the natural inference from what has been already said. If it be true that Popery is **IDOLATRY, AND AN UTTER CORRUPTION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH, AND CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES**, it is impossible that it should be any thing else than a morally corrupt and vicious system. For, although the sentiment has become a very popular one in these loose apostatizing times,—that the heart may be good, and the conduct pure, under any and every form of religion, it will remain an eternal truth, that evil principles as naturally produce evil practices,

as a corrupt tree brings forth corrupt fruit. Genuine Christianity is the only system of religion that is holy, and the only system that can produce holiness; and the farther removed that any doctrines are from those of Christianity, the more must their practical efficacy be the reverse of hers. In the predictions of Holy Scripture, which intimated before hand the character and reign of the Papacy, the Church of Rome is spoken of under such epithets and symbols, as strongly indicate her own intrinsic corruption, her unspeakable odiousness in the sight of God, and her baneful influence on the morals of mankind.* And when we contemplate her avowed doctrines, and read her history, we cannot but discern a most striking and awful correspondence between her actual character, and the representation previously given of her in the predictions of the divine word. What, for example, is the doctrine of indulgences, which ascribes to a priest the prerogative of dispensing for money the remission of sins?—What is the doctrine of purgatory, which teaches that guilt may be expiated, and pardon and holiness attained, *after* death, and that the most flagrant transgressor, if he shall only leave behind him a suitable compensation to the priest, will, in consequence of his intercessions, assuredly be rescued from torment and received into heaven?—What is the doctrine of

*See Thess. ii. 3, 7, 10, and Rev. xvii. 1—6. and xviii. 1—5.

venial sins, according to which, there are transgressions that deserve only temporal punishment, and do not expose to future condemnation?—What is the doctrine of the Pope's dispensing power,—which teaches that he can dissolve the most sacred ties, and cancel the most solemn obligations? What is the doctrine of penance, which substitutes the payment of money, or submission to some bodily mortification, in the room of that *repentance* which is inseparably connected with pardon and everlasting life?—What, in short, is the doctrine of extreme unction, according to which the anointing of the sick and the dying with consecrated oil infallibly delivers from unexpiated guilt, and unmortified sin, and prepares for heaven?—What, my brethren, are these doctrines,—and in the system of the Papacy, there are many doctrines like these—what are they, but positive encouragements to crime,—institutions that, in awful outrage to the divine religion whose name they assume, stand out in open hostility against all the purity, virtue, and happiness of mankind ! These are the “sorceries” and “abominations” of mystical Babylon, on account of which she is represented, in the beginning of this chapter, as “the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Under the operation of these pestilential doctrines, the ages of Rome's ascendancy were not merely ages of ignorance, but of awful corruption ;—immorality was prevalent among

all orders of men—down from the profligate heads to the humblest adherents of the hierarchy—in so much that one can scarcely even peruse the record of the corruption of those times without experiencing contamination. And, if we see not in present times the world groaning under the unmitigated burden of these pollutions, it is to be remembered, that, for this auspicious change, we are indebted to the Protestant Reformation—that blessed revolution which shed abroad the light of divine truth, and rescued many nations from the delusions and the power of Rome ;—but let it be at the same time remembered, that the system of the Papal Church remains the same it ever was—that she has never parted with one of her unholy tenets—is still openly avowing them, and embodying them in her practice,*—and is, therefore, still to be regarded as an abomination in the earth.

IV.—THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PAPAL CHURCH ARE HOSTILE TO THE WELFARE OF SOCIETY, AND RUINOUS TO SOULS.

In order to perceive the hostility that exists between the system of Popery and the social interests of mankind, it is only necessary to cast a cursory glance at the most prominent of the features by which it is distinguished. And, here I might, in the first place, remind you of what has been already demonstrated

* See Appendix No. II.

in a preceding part of this discourse—that Popery is a system of gross and degrading *idolatry*—and appeal to you, whether, from the manifold denunciations of divine displeasure against idolatry that occur in Holy Scripture, we are not warranted to believe, that the public acknowledgment and profession of such a system will bring down on the communities, in which it exists the awful judgments of the Most High. But, on this part of the argument I do not dwell,—not because I do not regard it as of importance in this discussion, for I consider it as of pre-eminent importance, —but, partly, because there are many persons by whom it is controverted, and, partly, because I deem it more proper, considering the narrow limits to which I am restricted, to advert especially to those features of Popery which have a *direct* bearing on the social welfare of mankind.

If I find that the system of the Roman Catholic Church has a tendency to fetter the human mind—to cherish ignorance,—to injure social morality—to make encroachments on the just rights of civil authority—to endanger civil liberty—and to inspire its votaries with a spirit of intolerance and persecution—is there any person of judgment and candour who will say, that I am not warranted to regard that system as utterly opposed to the dearest interests of human society? It is impossible. Now, my brethren, the whole tendency of the Popish system is; precisely that to which I have just alluded.—It fet-

ters the human intellect; for it strips away from man that glorious prerogative of his rational nature, the liberty of thinking, and inquiring, and judging for himself, and establishes in its room the debasing principle of *implicit belief*. It cherishes and promotes ignorance; for its favourite maxim is that "ignorance is the parent of devotion," and it regards those persons as guilty of heresy, who, in any instance, attempt to pass beyond the boundaries of belief which the church has prescribed. It is at war with morality; for, as was shown under last particular, many of its doctrines are nothing else than encouragements to crime. It makes encroachments on the rights of the civil powers; for it claims supremacy over all kings, demands that the various orders of its clergy shall be independent of secular authority, and accountable only to the ecclesiastical state, and exacts from them all a solemn oath, whereby they are bound to seek the advancement of *its* interest, above every other in the world. It endangers civil liberty; for it destroys its noblest safeguard—the independence of the mind—and cherishes, as most friendly to its interests, despotic power. In short, intolerance—fierce, unrelenting, persecuting intolerance—is the spirit which it inspires, and which its doctrines enjoin towards all who venture to rebel against its opinions and decisions.—This is a picture of Popery—not furnished, indeed, in the statements of its interested apologists, in modern times—but warranted, nay,

more than warranted, in its minutest shade, by the acknowledged doctrines, and by the whole history of the Papal Church. For, if you look into the decrees of her councils—particularly that of Trent, if you read the bulls and letters of her Popes, or if you consult the writings of her most esteemed and approved authors, of former or present times, you will find these principles unblushingly avowed* ; or, if, in some recent instances, attempts have been made to palliate their wickedness, and to gloss over their revolting aspect, it is easy to perceive, that this is one of those artifices by which Mystical Babylon has frequently deceived the nations of the earth.—It is no new experiment with her, to conceal, for a time, her character as “the wild devouring beast,” and to appear in the guise of the harmless “lamb”;—to stand forth in the eyes of mankind—not as the “mother of abominations,” “full of names of blasphemy and filthiness,”—but as “a queen,” “arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and pearls, and precious stones.”—And if, from the public documents of the Church of Rome, you turn to her history, you will find the principles to which I have been adverting brought into fearful operation. What is that history, but the melancholy detail of artful, proud, and persevering efforts on the part of the Papal hierarchy, to subjugate the human under-

* See Appendix, No. III.

standing, to crush inquiry, to extinguish knowledge, to gather into its treasury the wealth of the world, and to establish a boundless and uncontrolled dominion over the bodies and the consciences of mankind? As you pass on through the long series of its blood-stained pages, and contemplate successively its unhallowed achievements, it will be impossible for you not to feel that it is pre-eminently **THE FOX OF HUMAN SOCIETY**, and you will wonder that ever rational minds should have become so fearfully debased, as patiently to resign themselves to its atrocious oppression.

Of the truth of the proposition which I have been endeavouring to illustrate, our forefathers in the times of Reformation were deeply convinced. It was no matter of doubt with *them*, whether the principles of Popery are hostile to the social welfare of mankind. Its baneful influence had been long before their eyes. Alas! they had *felt* it. In the character of *patriots*, as well as of *religious* men, they set themselves against it, and sought to break its yoke for ever from the necks of their posterity.—For this purpose, among other momentous measures, they originated those confederacies, or **COVENANTS**, so famous in our country's annals—in which they solemnly consecrated their land to the Most High—put it under his protection, and separated it for ever from the system by which it had been degraded and oppressed. And although, on the part of ignorant, and unprincipled, and prejudiced men, these transactions have been censured

and traduced, I hesitate not to express my conviction, that they rank among the most memorable and illustrious appearances on behalf of civil and religious liberty which our history records, and that to them, under the blessing of divine Providence, we are mainly indebted for the preservation of the reformed religion, and the establishment of liberty throughout our realm.* Alas! these interesting and honourable deeds have long since been trampled in the dust by

*Dr. Robertson, whom no one will accuse of *bigotted* attachment to these ancient deeds, has the following honourable remarks respecting them;—"When roused by any extraordinary event, or alarmed by any public danger, the people of Israel were accustomed to bind themselves, by a solemn covenant, to adhere to that religion which the Almighty had established among them; and this the Scots considered as a sacred precedent which it became them to imitate.—Almost all the Popish princes were then joined in a league for extirpating the reformed religion, and nothing could be more natural, or seem more efficacious, than to enter into a counter-association, in order to oppose the progress of that formidable conspiracy. To these causes did the *covenant*, which is become so famous in history, owe its origin.—At the juncture in which it was first introduced, we may pronounce it to have been a prudent and laudable device for the defence of the religion and liberties of the nation, nor were the terms in which it was conceived, other than might have been expected from men alarmed with the impending danger of Popery, and threatened with an invasion by the most bigotted, and most powerful Prince in Europe."—*History of Scotland*.

the great body of those who have shared their blessings. A load of condemnatory sentences has lain upon them even to this day. Against them runs a strong current of public opinion; and now, at length, measures are proposed to be incorporated in our constitution, as entirely opposed to their spirit and tendency, and to the great cause which they were instituted to promote, as can possibly be conceived.— Whether all this be not deep infatuation, as far as concerns the glory of God, and the religious and political interests of these covenanted lands, time will show.

It is not necessary for me to dwell on the remaining part of the proposition which I have been illustrating. At the same time, it is of importance to advert to it; for, in the judgment of every person who is aware of the unspeakable value of the soul, its need of salvation, and its awful misery if finally lost, it cannot but be regarded as a fearful aggravation of the iniquity of the Papal Church, **THAT ITS DOCTRINES ARE RUINOUS TO SOULS.**

Of this truth it does seem that multitudes of Protestants, in present times, have entirely lost sight. In *their* imagination, Popery is merely Christianity under a peculiar form—differing from others, just as one system of ecclesiastical administration differs from another—and it is supposed that the great truths of the gospel by which sinners are saved are as really and as freely accessible to *its* disciples, as to the mem-

bers of any denomination in the Protestant Church, **Alas!** it is a vain imagination—entertained, not only in opposition to all that Scripture affirms respecting the Papacy, but in defiance of all the evidence to the contrary which is afforded by the avowed doctrines of the Church of Rome. Is she not, in holy Scripture, expressly, and in point of eminence, termed “**ANTI-CHRIST**”—“**MYSTERY OF INIQUITY**”—“**MAN OF SIN**”—and “**SON OF PERDITION?**” And is it not obvious, that, while these emphatic terms, applied by the Spirit of Truth to the Church of Rome, express the irreconcilable opposition that exists between her doctrines and the glory and kingdom of Christ—they at the same time intimate the fatal tendency of Papal principles, in reference to the spiritual and eternal interests of mankind?—Is it conceivable, that a system, which is pre-eminently “the foe of Christ,” should be any other than the foe of man? Is it likely, that a system, which, before God, is a “mystery of iniquity,” should have any correspondence in its spirit and influence with the “great mystery of godliness?” Is it to be imagined, that a system, whose character and doctrines are so corrupt and abominable, as to procure for it, from him who cannot lie, the appellation of the “man of sin,” can have any tendency to renovate the heart, or to sanctify the life? No, my brethren, if faith in the doctrines of the Papal Church could really be the mean of holiness and salvation, it would be impossible to account

for the appalling terms in which her character was before-hand delineated in holy writ.

In the enumeration which the Spirit of God has given of the articles of Rome's unhallowed merchandise, it will be recollected that express mention is made of "the souls of men;"* and it is impossible to contemplate her acknowledged principles, without feeling that the perdition of the human soul is the melancholy consummation to which they lead. In the first place, she interdicts "the indiscriminate perusal of the Holy Scriptures" on the part of her members, affirming "that more evil than good is found to result from it;"† or, if, in some instances, she permits them to be read, the permission is restricted to those versions which she has thought proper to authorise. And what are *they*? Versions in which important statements of Holy Scripture are grossly mis-translated, to countenance her favourite but ruinous doctrines, and in which the holy Oracles of the living God are corrupted and debased, by being intermingled with the heresies and blasphemies of ungodly men. Now, in the one case as well as in the other, there is peril to souls. If the disciples of the Papacy be deprived altogether of the Divine Word—and this is the condition of by far the greater part of them—how shall "the simple" be made "wise unto salvation?"—"Faith cometh by hearing," but "hearing by the Word of

* Rev. xviii. 12.

† See Appendix. No. IV.

God."—Or, how shall they attain the "doctrine, the reproof, the correction, the instruction in righteousness," for which "all scripture was given by inspiration of God," and for which, we are expressly assured, it is "profitable?"*—If, on the other hand, the Scriptures, *as authorised by the Church of Rome, are given to her members, and studied by them, is there not the dreadful probability—since the deceitful heart of man is much more disposed to embrace error than truth—that the soul-ruining delusions which her adulterated Bible contains will be laid hold of, and confided in,—and that thus, ignorant and perishing men will pass on to eternity, putting their trust in refuges of lies, which the storm of the wrath of God will sweep utterly away?*†

But it is not merely in this *indirect* way that the Popish doctrines are dangerous to souls;—in a variety of instances, they are, if believed and confided in, positively destructive. In proof of this, I appeal to her acknowledged and avowed tenets on that immensely important point—the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God. An error in this matter is unquestionably of fundamental moment. If a man, in order to obtain pardon and salvation, build his confidence on a foundation which God in his Word has not only not authorised, but expressly condemned—it is awful and presumptuous infatuation to

* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. † See Appendix, No. V.

suppose that he can be saved.—Now what is it that God in his blessed Word exhibits to mankind as the only basis of a sinner's hope? Is it not the perfect and divine righteousness of his incarnate Son? Hath he not "set HIM forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood?" Hath he not represented HIM as "THE FOUNDATION LAID IN ZION?" And hath he not solemnly assured us, that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ;" and that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved?" But is *this* the ground of hope in which the disciples of the Papacy are instructed to confide? No, my brethren, the whole tendency of their system is to dishonour and degrade it. I know, indeed, that the name and the merits of Jesus are introduced in the public formularies of the Church of Rome; but are they referred to as the only, and all-sufficient foundation of a sinner's hope for eternity? No such thing. The purport of all her allusions to the mediatory work of Christ is—that he has merely introduced us into a *salvable* state,—has brought it to pass that our alms-deeds, penances, and other good works, will be accepted before God, as the meritorious cause of our salvation! In proof of this, I appeal to the formerly quoted Decree of her last Council—in which the scriptural doctrine of justification through faith in the righteousness of Christ is condemned, and its holders anathematized, and the opposite doctrine—

that good works are meritorious of salvation—expressly affirmed. And, in connection with that blasphemous Decree, I appeal to the following specimen of Catholic theology, which, only the other day, was addressed to all the Popish clergy and people of Ireland, by their Archbishops and Bishops:—“ Let those who possess wealth or distinction consider themselves raised above the poor, only that they may be a refuge and protection to the indigent and miserable, showing all manner of good example to their neighbours and dependents. Let them wipe the tear from the cheek of the widow, and feed the hungry orphan, *thus expiating their sins by alms-deeds, and purchasing up their iniquities by mercies to the poor.*”* Is this, my friends, the doctrine of the Bible?—Is this doctrine in which it is safe for a guilty, perishing sinner to confide? Assuredly not. It is doctrine which in Holy Scripture is solemnly subjected to the divine malediction.†—It tramples under foot the atonement of

* See “The Pastoral Instructions by the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops, to the Clergy and Laity of their communion throughout Ireland,”—appended to the translation of “The Encyclical Letter of Leo XII, published in Dublin, 1824. These “Instructions,” one of which is above adverted to, are subscribed by twenty-seven Archbishops and Bishops, and are ordered to be read, “at the time of mass, by the Clergy, on successive Sundays, in presence of the faithful.”

† Galatians, i. 8.

the Son God. It establishes another foundation than that which God has condescended to provide ; and, if there is truth in the Bible, we must believe that those who pass on to eternity confiding in such doctrine as this, are deluded to their everlasting ruin.

It would be easy to mention a variety of other points, in reference to which, the ruinous tendency of the Popish doctrines might be demonstrated. In the Word of inspiration, for example, we are assured that the grace of evangelical *repentance* is indispensably necessary in order to the attainment of divine forgiveness. But among the Papal doctrines, that *repentance*, which is the fruit of faith, and the work of the Spirit of God in the soul, is not to be found. In the room of it are substituted Auricular Confession, and the sacrament of Penance—institutions which manifestly owe their invention to papal avarice and rapacity ; while, in order to countenance this awful corruption of the gospel of Christ, the language of the Saviour is dreadfully perverted.—“ Except ye repent,” are his words, “ ye shall all likewise perish.”* But, in the Papal translation, we find them thus rendered—“ Except ye do penance, ye shall all likewise perish.” In the doctrines of Popery respecting internal and practical *holiness* we find the same fearful and ruinous departure from scriptural truth. In the Holy Word it is expressly and solemnly declared, that “ except a man be born again he cannot see the

* Luke xiii. 3—5.

kingdom of God," and that "without holiness no man can see the Lord." But in the Church of Rome, if her members allow themselves to be guided by her doctrines, the holiness of the gospel can have no place. Instead of being instructed to seek the regeneration of the heart, by the Spirit of God, and to study evangelical purity in the life, the disciples of the Papacy are taught to regard the ordinance of Christian baptism—awfully corrupted as it is among them by unscriptural and unmeaning ceremonies—as efficacious for regenerating the soul, and to look upon a rigid conformity to the rites of the Church as the very essence of piety and holy obedience. Who does not perceive that such principles and doctrines as these are incalculably perilous to souls; and who, that understands the Bible, and has any bowels of mercies for his fellow-men, does not tremble for the everlasting condition of those by whom they are believed?

Do I feel pleasure in making these statements?—Am I gratified by convicting the Church of Rome of holding principles destructive to souls? No, my brethren;—I deplore her melancholy condition—I grieve for the multitudes of my fellow men whose everlasting welfare is placed in such awful jeopardy; and I think with poignant regret of the myriads of immortal spirits, whom, in the long period of her dismal reign, she has led down by the chambers of eternal death. But I have made these statements because I feel it to be the duty of the Minister of Jesus

Christ to denounce every system that is in hostility to his Lord and Master ; and because I am convinced that to expose the pernicious tendency of the Papal tenets is charity to souls. It is charity to *you*, my brethren, to endeavour to remove from your minds light apprehensions of the evil of Popery, and to warn you against its soul-destroying errors. And it is charity to the poor deluded disciples of Popery, to tell them of the danger of their condition, if, happily, through the grace of God, some of them may “ be converted from the error of their way,” and “ saved from death.”

I am not to be understood, however, as affirming by any of the preceding statements, that salvation is a thing impossible in the Church of Rome—that there never were, or that there are not at present any of the people of God ranged under the banners of the great “ apostacy.” I know who hath said—“ come out of her, *my people*, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”* I know that “ with God all things are possible,” and that the enlightening and converting grace of the Spirit of God can, if it seem good in his sight, counteract the tendency of Papal corruption, and bless the small portion of his pure Word that may be enjoyed for the conversion and salvation of souls. And I believe that, in former times, there were many, and hope that there still are some in connexion with this apostate Church, who

* Rev. xviii. 4.

have been led to discover, and in their hearts to reject many of her errors,—who reprobate her idolatrous worship, and do not live under the influence of her immoral and soul-destroying principles. Such persons ought to separate themselves from her, and all such shall be gathered out of her, ere the days of her desolation arrive. But, at the same time, I do not hesitate to express my conviction, that, where the tenets of the Church of Rome are really believed, there cannot be vital, scriptural religion, and that all who embrace her errors, partake in her idolatries, and imbibe the spirit of her system, are walking in the way of the destroyer, and passing on, if divine mercy do not prevent, to everlasting ruin. For thus saith the Lord God by whom Babylon is judged—“If any man worship the beast or his image, or receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,—the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”*

And now, my brethren, having placed before you, in the foregoing illustrations, a faint but faithful outline of THE CHARACTER OF THE PAPAL CHURCH, I appeal to you whether the representation is not an awful one? It was with good reason—that the apostle

* Rev. xiv. 9. 10.

John “wondered with great admiration” when he beheld rising up in the Christian Church such a dreadful apostacy from the purity of Christian truth and worship, such a mighty adversary of God and of the Redeemer, and such an inveterate enemy of the dearest interests of mankind! Contemplating the character of Popery, you behold ample reason for the names, expressive of aggravated wickedness, that are given to it in the prophecies of Holy Scripture.—On the temples sacred to this “mystery of abominations,” you cannot but discern, inscribed in plain and legible characters—what trembling Belshazzar beheld written by the finger of the Almighty on the wall of his palace—“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.”—As you look upon the melancholy scene, a voice from on high falls with loud and solemn emphasis on your ear—“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:”—And you feel constrained to acknowledge, that there are righteousness and truth in all the wrathful visitations that have been determined against her by the Most High.

In concluding this Discourse respecting the CHARACTER of the Papal Church, I shall very briefly advert to some of the practical remarks which are suggested by the preceding illustrations.

I. HOW MYSTERIOUS IS THE PROVIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST!

In Holy Scripture we are assured that He is "made the head over all things to the Church,"—that "all things are given into His hand,"—and that "all power in heaven and in earth is given unto Him." And in the marvellous effusion of the holy Spirit on the Church, which was consequent on our Redeemer's ascension, we have a blessed evidence of the truth of these declarations. Accordingly, said the Apostle Peter, on the memorable day of Pentecost, expressing the evidence of Messiah's investiture with mediatory power—"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses: Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." "Wherefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both **LORD AND CHRIST.**"* But, when we contemplate his administration in the history of the New Testament Church, what do we behold? A scene which, if it were to be regarded without respect to his Word, and through any other medium than that of faith, would fill us with doubt, and sink us down into despondency! We behold, rising up in the very midst of his Church, a mighty adversary of his people and of his glory;—we see this enemy corrupting, and debasing, and trampling in the dust his blessed truths—adulte-

* Acts ii 32, 33, 36.

rating his worship—assailing his faithful people with unrelenting and inveterate persecution, wearing them out, and triumphing over them for hundreds of years—and all the while blaspheming his name by pretending to act on his behalf, and by the sanction of his authority! This is the scene which is emphatically termed in divine prophecy—“The mystery of God.”* Contemplating it we cannot help exclaiming—“Verily Thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour!”—“Clouds and darkness are round about thee!” “Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters; thy footsteps are not known!”

While, however, my brethren, we perceive, and acknowledge, and adore the mysterious character of our Redeemer's Mediatorial administration, it becomes us never to be moved away from the belief of his omnipotent and universal reign. In *this* truth it is of unspeakable importance to our peace and joy of faith to be firmly established—that “He reigneth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth,”—and that “he must reign until all his enemies be made his footstool.” If he “hide himself from the house of Jacob,” it is to try the faith and the patience of his saints. If “clouds and darkness are round about him,” “justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” If “thunderings and lightnings” proceed forth from before him, the “rainbow” of the covenant, “in sight like

* Rev. x. 7.

unto an emerald"—emblem of faithfulness and peace—is the canopy of his seat. If "for a small moment" he "forsake" his people, "with great mercies" will he "gather them." If he "cover his face from them for a moment, with everlasting kindness will he have mercy on them."—And if the counsels that guide his high administration are among the "secret things" which he hath kept in his own power, it will be but for a short space that he will call upon his saints to "walk by faith,"—"what they know not now they shall know hereafter," and they shall acknowledge with everlasting gratitude, that "he hath done all things well."

II. IN THE RISE AND REIGN OF THE PAPAL POWER, WE ARE FURNISHED WITH AN IRRESISTIBLE ARGUMENT FOR THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE, AND THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

In the prophecies of Holy Scripture the character of the Papal power is minutely delineated, the scene of its unhallowed reign is announced, and the period of its duration precisely determined. It was revealed to the Church, ere yet the first century of her New-Testament history was concluded, that a signal "Apostacy" from Christian truth and worship was soon to take place;—that the head of this Apostacy "would sit in the temple of God, and oppose, and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped;"—that "the coming" of this iniquitous

system would be “after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders;”^{*}—that “the kings of the earth” would be subjected to its influence, and would “give their power and strength unto it,”[†]—that it would employ pompous ceremonies, and all manner of external splendour to delude and ensnare mankind,[‡]—that it would denounce and excommunicate all who would not receive its doctrines, and acknowledge its sway,[§]—that it would “make war with the saints,” and be “drunken with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”^{||}—that it would arise after the dissolution of the fourth empire, and its division into ten kingdoms[¶]—and that it would endure twelve hundred and sixty years.^{††} Now, although it is true, that every age of the past history of the gospel Church there have been “many Antichrists”—many who have set themselves in opposition to the character, the truths, and the kingdom of our Redeemer,—it is impossible not to perceive—unless men resolutely shut their eyes against the truth—that all the predicted features of “The Antichrist” to which I have adverted, are to be recognised in the character of the Church of Rome, and in her character alone. *Hers* is the most awful

^{*} 2d Thess. ii. 3, 4, 9.

[†] Rev. xvii. 13.

[‡] Rev. xvii. 4.

[§] Rev. xii. 16, 17.

^{||} Rev. xii. 7, and xvii. 6.

[¶] Dan. vii. 23—25, compared with 2d Thess. ii. 5—8.

^{††} Dan. vii. 25.—xii. 7. Rev. xiii. 5.—xii. 6, 14, &c.

apostacy from pure Christianity that ever has been beheld in New-Testament times ;—I will even affirm, it is the most awful apostacy that *can* be beheld under the Christian name.* She claims to be the only church, or “temple” of God, and, at the same time, her head makes himself equal, and even superior to God—in affecting divine titles, attributes, and honours, in assuming a power of dispensing with divine laws, and in substituting for the commandments of God the traditions of men. Her system appeared and made progress in the world with a show of visions, and revelations, and miracles, and many a lying won-

* “It is, perhaps, impossible in the very nature of things that such another scheme as Popery should be invented. It is, in truth, *the mystery of iniquity*, that it should be able to work itself into the simple, grand, sublime, holy institution of Christianity, and so to interweave its abominations with the truth as to occupy the strongest passions, and the strongest understandings. While Pascal can speak of Popery as he does, its influence over the mass of the people can excite no surprise.—These two master principles—that we must believe as the church ordains, and that there is no salvation out of the church—oppose, in the ignorance and fear which they beget, an almost insuperable barrier against the truth.”—
CECIL.

“Popery,” says the same writer, “was the master-piece of Satan. I believe him utterly incapable of such another contrivance. It was a systematic and infallible plan for forming manacles and mufflers for the human mind. It was a well-laid design to render Christianity contemptible by the abuse of its principles and institutions.”

der do her legends record. Over many countries of Europe did she extend her jurisdiction; partly by menaces, and partly by flatteries, did she obtain entire ascendancy over Christian princes—so as to have them zealous members of her communion, blindly devoted to her interest, and ready on all occasions to fight her battles; and, at this moment, there is scarcely a political constitution in Christendom that is not framed on the model, and friendly to the interests of Popery. In her eminently are the “purple and scarlet,” the rich and splendid vestment, the pomp and parade of ceremony, with all the artifice of ornament and ostentation, in order to gain men to her communion. She demands implicit obedience—causes all, both small and great, “to receive her mark”—anathematizes all who will not conform to her creed—and excommunicates them from the intercourse of social and civil life. She stands pre-eminent in the history of the world as a persecutor of the faithful people of God, and, in every country of Europe, has left the melancholy memorials of her intolerance. Her power arose in the latter times of the Roman empire, and from among the kingdoms into which it was divided; nor could she “be revealed,” or take her place, until her heathen predecessor was “removed out of the way.” In short, whereas the prophetic record intimates that the duration of the Antichristian Apostacy shall be twelve hundred and sixty years, her reign has extended to upwards of a thousand and seventy, and she is not yet destroyed. Such, my brethren, is the striking

correspondence that exists between the character of Mystical Babylon, as delineated in the prophecies of the Holy Word, and as exhibited in the doctrines and the history of the Church of Rome :—and thus, although the permission of the reign of the Papacy is, unquestionably, a most mysterious part of the ways of God, out of that very dark and perplexing dispensation, do we gather an evidence of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, and of the truth of our religion, which, if seriously regarded, cannot but carry conviction to every unprejudiced, inquiring mind.

It is altogether inconceivable, that such a series of announcements, as that which we have been contemplating, should have entered into the mind of uninspired men ;—and, when we behold these announcements receiving, from the times of primitive Christiauity, even until now, such a minute and ample fulfilment as to make them resemble rather a detail of past, than a prophecy of future events—it is impossible to withstand the conviction, that all has been brought to pass by the inspiration and the agency of Him who “ knows the end from the beginning, and from ancient time the things that are not yet come to pass,” whose “ counsel stands,” and who “ will do all his pleasure.”—“ This or nothing is the work of God,”—said an early Apologist for Christianity,*—“ to declare that a thing shall be, long before it is in being, and then to bring

* Justin Martyr.

about the accomplishment of that very thing, according to the same declaration." Indeed, so striking and conclusive is the argument for Christianity which is furnished by the prophecies respecting "the Man of Sin" and Mystical "Babylon," that one of the most acute and masterly reasoners ever produced by this or any other country* has declared, that he would feel no hesitation in resting the truth of revealed religion entirely on them. "If," says he, after enumerating some of the Scriptural predictions relating to BABYLON THE GREAT,—“if, in the days of St. Paul and St. John, there were any footsteps of such a sort of power as this in the world, or, if there ever had been such a power in the world ; or, if there was then any appearance of probability that could make it enter into the heart of man to imagine that there ever could be such a power in the *world*, much less in the *temple* or Church of God;—and, if there be not *now* such a power actually and conspicuously exercised in the world ; and, if any picture of this power, *drawn after the event*, can describe it more plainly and exactly than it was originally described in the words of the prophecy ;—then may it with some degree of plausibleness be suggested, that the prophecies are nothing more than enthusiastic inventions.”

Instead, therefore, my brethren, of being moved from our faithful attachment to the religion of Jesus

* Dr Clarke.

by the mysterious part of his government which we have been considering, let us—at the same time that we adore the sovereignty of the dispensation in question—rejoice that even through it there is light reflected on the truth and glory of the Christian Faith. Our divine religion brings its own evidence along with it—evidence not less powerful and sublime, than if its truth were written with a sun-beam, or proclaimed with thunder in the heavens. It is *our* privilege to have the “Word of Prophecy” made “more sure”^{*}—confirmed to us more—by the faithful accomplishment of predicted events, than it ever was to the Church in former times; and it becomes us to “take heed” to it, as “a light shining” in this dark world,—instructing and cheering us respecting the conditions and prospects of the Church, and our own duty—till we reach that better region where “there shall be no night,” and where “they shall need no candle, neither light of the sun,”—the “Lord God Almighty and the Lamb” being its “light” and its “everlasting glory.”

III.—HOW THANKFUL OUGHT WE TO BE FOR THE REFORMATION FROM POKERY!

But for the interference of divine Providence in that great Revolution, we had been in the condition of the people who lived in the dark ages—ignorant, en-

* 2 Pet. i. 19.

slaved, degraded men—destitute of the knowledge of God, of Christ, and of eternal life—stript of the dignity of our rational nature—creeping on the ground—the victims of the most debasing and withering spiritual and temporal despotism that ever was permitted to defile the earth. It is the REFORMATION that has scattered the darkness, and made the light of life and joy shine upon us—that has broken and cast away the chains of intellectual thralldom wherewith we were bound—that has diffused over the secular institutions and intercourse of mankind a thousand charms, and has lifted up our minds to the blissful knowledge, and the sublime hope of everlasting life. For this great work of God it becomes us, my brethren, to cherish in our hearts the liveliest gratitude. It was manifestly “the doing of the Lord,” and should be “wondrous in our eyes.” He “hath done great things” for us, for his Church, and for the world, whereof we should be glad. And let us be concerned to testify our gratitude, in every legitimate way, in our conduct. Let us testify it, in offering up our thanksgivings to HIM who is “the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in time of trouble,” because he “arose and had mercy on Zion”—heard the prayers of martyred saints, and of his persecuted people—and, by the preaching of his gospel, and the wise arrangements of his providence, shook Babylon to her foundation, and inflicted on her greatness and power a mortal wound. In one of the

visions of this book we find the Church represented as thus engaged, in relation, I apprehend, to the very event which we are contemplating:—"The seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying,—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." The time was come when the nations that had long devoted their influence to his great adversary, were to begin, in their national character, to do service to Christ. "And the four and twenty elders who sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying—"We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and wast, and art to come, because Thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned."—Let us testify our gratitude, moreover, by holding in veneration the memory of those illustrious and holy men, who devoted themselves to the rescue of Christ's precious gospel from its long and dismal corruption, and who counted not their lives dear unto them, if they might only be successful in securing to future generations the pure religion of Christ, and the liberty of worshipping God according to his Word. In fine, let us testify our gratitude, by studying and prizing the peculiar principles of the Reformation—by contending earnestly, in our respective places, and by every scriptural mean, against the errors and abo-

* Rev. xi. 15, 17.

Beware lest, intending to give them spiritual food, you administer poison. Beware, I beseech you, lest, instead of being instrumental in their conversion from the error of their way, you be thus the means of strengthening their attachment to their system, and of carrying them onward to eternity, in more thorough dependance on their refuges of lies.

V. HOW SINFUL AND PERILOUS MUST IT BE TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH ANTICHRIST!

By "having fellowship" with Antichrist, I understand, not merely the maintenance of ecclesiastical communion with the Church of Rome, but also the giving public, and especially *national* countenance to her system, and the advancing its adherents to national influence and power. Now, if the Antichristian system be so utterly opposed to Christianity, so full of dishonour to God and our blessed Redeemer, so distinguished by spiritual corruption, and so ruinous to souls, as has been demonstrated in the preceding part of this Discourse, to have fellowship with it, in the sense which I have mentioned, must be CRIMINAL in no ordinary degree. It is openly and grossly, before all the world, to insult the great God of nations, whom individually and nationally we are bound and profess to serve. It is to caress what he loathes, to countenance abominations by which he is dishonoured, to lend support to a system which is opposed to his revealed purposes, and which he has announced his

determination utterly to destroy. I would force no man to be a Christian or to be a Protestant. A religious profession which is the result of *force* can be nothing but a pretence. You may compel a man's hand to sign certain articles of religious belief, and you may prostrate his body before the altar of a peculiar mode of worship ; but you cannot control his mind—you cannot compel the homage of his soul. No—I would leave to the “ Mother of Abominations”—who has long been “drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus”—and would utterly abominate her dungeons, her tortures, her inquisitions, and all the other inventions of cruelty which she has employed for the conversion of mankind. These things, in all their forms and degrees, are *Antichristian*. But my brethren, I would, at the same time, lift up my open and decided testimony against the giving national countenance, in a Christian land, to a system so dishonouring to the great God, so blaspheming to the Saviour, so hostile to his Church, and so ruinous to souls, as that whose character we have been considering. For, if it is sinful, either in individuals or a nation, to give countenance to the profanation of the day of God ; and if it is sinful to countenance the blaspheming of His most holy and blessed name, I cannot conceive how it should not be esteemed a much more aggravated iniquity, to give countenance to a system which combines, in its doctrines and practice, a *thousand* abominations, as contrary to the will of

God, as hostile to morality and the welfare of souls, and as solemnly prohibited in the Divine Word as these. I will be reminded, indeed, of the *rights of conscience*, but I have yet to learn that the dictates of a blinded and erring conscience ought to be regarded as of more importance in the counsels of states than the injunctions and announcements of the "living and true God." If the principle were once admitted—that the decisions of a man's conscience are the standard according to which we are to judge respecting sin and duty, then might the Sabbath-breaker appeal to his *conscience* in vindication of his conduct respecting the day of God, and the profane swearer might appeal to *his* conscience in relation to the insults which he offers to God's most holy name; and thus might it be pled, that for a State to guard from desecration, by public enactments, either the name or the day of God, is to lord it over conscience, and to infringe on the liberty which is unalienable from man. But would such a plea be tolerated by Christians? Unquestionably not. And, my brethren, if Popery be a corrupt, idolatrous, God-dishonouring, and soul-destroying system, and if the displeasure of the Almighty is solemnly denounced against all by whom it shall be befriended, it is impossible that any consideration in the world should render it other than an aggravated iniquity, for the people of a Protestant State to extend to it their countenance and their regard. Nor can I help expressing my conviction, that the connection

which we have had, as a nation, with Mystical Babylon, and the regard we have manifested for her devotees, and the over-weening kindness and support we have afforded to her interests,* are among the most prominent of our national iniquities, and have gathered around us the tokens of a controversy which our God will not cease to plead with us, until Babylon and we shall be separated totally and for ever.

Connected with the CRIMINALITY which attaches to having fellowship with the interest of the Man of

* It has not been deemed enough for us, in these times of liberalism, to have granted the adherents of Rome unlimited toleration, and to have conferred on them political privileges which have been denied to conscientious Dissenters, whose principles, in reference to the welfare of the State, are of unquestionable probity—we have even been so generous towards Rome as to give her abominations a legal establishment, in a large and interesting portion of our foreign dominions—and we have devoted for years some thousands of pounds of our annual revenue to the maintenance of a great Popish College in England—and we have made a compliment of ground in the British metropolis for the erection of an idolatrous mass-house, capable of containing ten thousand persons—and, as if all this had not been enough, we have at least in one instance, salaried, at a high rate, a Popish priest, to superintend the spiritual concerns of twenty thousand of our poor, injured, degraded African slaves! Alas! a multitude of infatuated proceedings like these has connected us closely and fearfully with Antichristian Rome—has involved us in her guilt—and will there is reason to fear, bind us down to a participation in her plagues.

Sin, there is imminent PERIL to the communities by which it is countenanced. In the first place, there is peril to immortal souls—in as much as the advancement of the Papal system to public regard and influence puts it in a condition to extend its deadly grasp over other victims, and to accomplish wider and more signal spiritual destruction:—and, although it is true, that the primary object of government is not the salvation of souls, but the promotion of men's secular welfare, I am bound to declare, that that state, or that government would act a most unchristian and impious part, which would bestow marks of its favour, and confer influence and power, upon a system whose principles are pregnant with fearful ruin to the highest—the everlasting interests of its people.—Moreover, in having fellowship with Mystical Babylon, there is imminent peril to the public interests of the Civil State. Admit her citizens into authority and influence in your Protestant realm, and you receive into it those who are its natural and unchanging foes. I grant you, that no man ought to be excluded from offices of civil authority merely on account of his principles in religion.—Liberty to inquire and to judge for himself, especially in the high concerns of the soul and eternity, is every man's precious birthright—a privilege which our reforming forefathers secured for us by their contendings and their blood. It is a sin against the spirit of the Reformation and of Christianity, to subject a man to civil pains and

penalties on account of principles that are purely religious. But, if you find a class of men, whose religious principles are inveterately opposed to the best and dearest of those institutions, beneath the shade of which your State has prospered and increased in glory, would you not regard it as imminently perilous to advance them to fellowship in the administration of your affairs? And would you not smile at the simplicity of the man who would accuse you of persecution, and of trampling on the rights of conscience, because, forsooth, you merely withheld from those persons an authority which they had no natural right to claim, and which they were not qualified to exercise?—In fine, let it be considered, that in having fellowship with Babylon, there is fearful peril in reference to the threatened judgments of Almighty God. There are “plagues” in store for her devoted interest, under the infliction of which she shall be totally destroyed, and, in these visitations of divine wrath, all the nations that have in any degree devoted themselves to her support, and identified themselves with her interest, shall assuredly share. This consideration, I know, the wise, political men of this world would deem light and frivolous, for there are no principles that enter less into their plans, calculations, and enterprizes, than regard for the glory of God and dread of his displeasure. Alas for the nations, while this continues to be the case! It will never be well with them, till the atheism, and

ungodliness, and sordid secularity that have so long directed their counsels be made to pass away, and until their administration shall become deeply imbued with the spirit of Christianity and the Bible, and be conducted with a high and holy regard to the honour and the approbation of HIM "by whom kings reign and princes decree justice," and who hath promised to his Church, that "kings shall be her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers."—In the mean time, the fearful denunciations of his displeasure, which God hath issued forth against Mystical Babylon, will deeply affect all who "fear the Lord," and who "tremble at his word," and will lead them, on the part of their beloved country, to deprecate fellowship with a system against which the dreadful sentence has gone forth, and the murmurings of the distant storm are already heard, and whose overthrow will be accompanied with the desolation and ruin of the kingdoms and states that have leagued themselves with it.

VI.—IT BECOMES THE CHURCH OF CHRIST TO REJOICE BECAUSE THIS GREAT SYSTEM OF DELUSION AND IMPIETY SHALL HAVE AN END.

It hath pleased HIM, who "purchased the Church with his own blood," to ordain that her state in this world should be, for the most part, a state of suffering.—By this arrangement she is conformed to himself—her spiritual graces are exercised and perfected

—and the felicity and glory of her celestial condition will be sweetened and enhanced.—But it hath not seemed good to him that the condition of his Church on earth should be one of *unmingled* suffering. He hath appointed for her seasons of enlargement—“times of refreshing”—when he arises, and has mercy upon her, and repairs her desolations. The most eminent of these is yet to come—a season that will “fill her mouth with laughter, and her tongue with praise.”—It is given to the “Man of Sin”—the “horn” of wickedness—to “speak great words against the Most High, and to wear out the saints, *until a time, and times, and the dividing of time.*” This period of Zion’s tribulation, and of the prosperity of her great adversary, is drawing nigh its termination. The emphatic symbol in my text shall ere long be realized, and great Babylon shall fall, to deceive the nations no more for ever. “The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away her dominion, to consume, and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”*—In anticipation of this great event, let the “kindreds of the earth” who have been enriched by Babylon’s merchandise “wail and lament;” but let the people of “the

* Dan. vii. 25-27.

living God" rejoice. Let them lift up their heads with joy, for the day of their deliverance draweth nigh. "Awake, put on strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem!" for thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer,—“O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires.”—“The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree—the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary, and I will make the place of my feet glorious. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and thou shalt suck the breast of kings, and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls salvation, and thy gates praise. Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.”*

* Isa. lx. 10—20.

DISCOURSE II.

DISCOURSE II.

REV. XVIII. 21—24.

And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voices of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be found no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee: And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

THE reign of the Antichristian power is, unquestionably, the most awful and mysterious visitation wherewith the Church of Christ has been exercised. In the course of her Old-Testament history, she had many a melancholy season; and, in particular, she experienced a long and dismal captivity, during which her magnificent temple was in ruins, her divinely-instituted worship interdicted, and her goodly land a scene of desolation. In the early part of her New-Testament history, too, she was for ages oppressed, and afflicted, and persecuted by Paganism, under the

influence of the heathen priesthood, and through the instrumentality of the secular authorities of heathen Rome. But far more melancholy than any of these visitations was the reign of the Papacy. For,

I. It commenced just at the time when a long and blissful season of rest and prosperity seemed about to be enjoyed by the followers of Christ. They had been wading through the fires of ten dreadful persecutions inflicted by their Pagan adversaries. Under these tremendous visitations they had often anxiously and with sorrow proposed the question—"Watchman, what of the night?" And the souls of the martyrs slain "for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ," had often urged the expostulation—"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" But on the conversion of Constantine, and his accession to the imperial throne, the morn of a blissful day seemed to dawn upon the Church—Satan's kingdom fell like lightning to the ground—idolatry was overturned—and under the shade of a Christian establishment the disciples of Christ had rest, were edified, and, walking in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, remembered their sorrows no more.—Alas! this season of prosperity was short. It was a brief period of sunshine and calm—the presage of a terrible and wasting storm. After little more than twenty years of peace and joy, during which minister-

ing angels restrained the winds of error and persecution from raging, that the servants of God might be sealed, and prepared for bearing testimony to the cause of Christ in the ensuing days of apostacy and tribulation—the Church had again to pass into a suffering condition, and to dwell in the wilderness, where the hostility of apostate Christians fiercely assailed her, while the winds of error and delusion swept furiously over every district of the Roman earth.

II. The reign of the Papacy was a period of awful spiritual darkness. Ignorance is the basis of spiritual usurpation. It was well known to the ambitious priesthood, who sought to obtain lordship over God's heritage, that it would be when knowledge was taken away from the people, when the intellectual eye was closed in deepest darkness, and the valley of vision converted into "the valley of the shadow of death," that they could bend the human mind as they wished, and establish the proud usurpation over the secular and spiritual concerns of men to which they aspired. Every mean, therefore, was employed to induce intellectual darkness, and especially the records of divine truth were shut up in an unknown tongue, and utterly withdrawn from the reading of the people. In process of time, many even of those who professed to be the spiritual guides of their fellow-men, hardly knew that there was such a book as the Bible—useful learning was banished away from them—

and the extent of their knowledge was an acquaintance with the mere *letter* of the worthless formulary of devotion, which they read daily in an unknown tongue to the beguiled multitude.—The multitude! what must have been *their* condition when such was the character of their instructors! With what awful emphasis were these words of God fulfilled in them—“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge!” Deluded with the notion that their penances, and pilgrimages, and manifold bodily mortifications, were the assured path to everlasting life, they were sunk in the slumbers of spiritual death—the prey of the power of darkness—“without Christ,” “having no hope,” and “without God in the world.”

III. It was consequent on this, that the reign of the Papacy was a period of awful error. Christian truth was utterly buried under a mass of debasing superstitions; and, in the room of the sublime doctrines of the oracles of the living God, the creed of the Church and the minds of her disciples were conversant with dogmas dishonouring to God, and debasing and ruining to the souls of mankind.

IV. Persecution—fierce, unrelenting persecution, was the characteristic of the Papal reign—persecution carried on so extensively as to reach the disciples of Christ in every region of the Roman earth, and so perseveringly as to wear out the saints of the Most High

and aggravated in its bitterness beyond expression by the melancholy consideration that it was inflicted—not by heathens—but by a Church which still continued to be called Christian, and claimed to be the only true Church of the Saviour of men !

V. Add to all this, that the reign of the Papacy has been of long duration. In Old-Testament Scripture we find the Church mourning over her woes under the character of “*long desolations* ;”^{*} and, regarded abstractly, they were both sad and long perpetuated. It was sad to think of the holy land lying desolate—the temple of Jehovah demolished, and its glorious furniture given up to the power of heathen spoilers—his worship at a stand in the world, and his worshippers scattered among the nations, the sport and the song of those who carried them captive—and that this dismal state of matters was permitted to continue during the long space of seventy years ! But, compared with the reign of Antichrist, this period of Zion’s captivity was short. *His* reign extends not to years merely, but to ages. Eight centuries of Antichristian darkness, error, and persecution, passed over degraded and perishing mankind, ere ever the dawn of the morning appeared ; and even now, after reigning more than a thousand years, Mystical is Babylon still exercising a destructive and debasing sway over the greater part of the nations in the western world.

* Ps. lxxiv. 3.

When these things are considered, it will be perceived that the reign of the Papacy has been by far the most melancholy visitation wherewith the Church has ever been exercised; nor can we hesitate to acknowledge, that the permitting this "mystery of iniquity" to exist, and to oppose and triumph over the Church for so long a period, is one of the most inscrutable dispensations of the Almighty—a dispensation, the mystery of which will never be penetrated by the people of God, until they contemplate it amid the light of that better world where they "shall know even as they are known."

At the same time, there are two considerations which, when we meditate on this painful subject, must not be forgotten.

I. In the darkest times of the reign of Antichrist, our blessed Lord left not himself without witnesses to his truths and his cause. The Church of Rome, once so famous, had, indeed, ceased to be a Church of Christ. She had so corrupted the Christian doctrines and worship with heathenish opinions and ceremonies, that she had become a "synagogue of Satan"—"the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit;" and amid all the pomp and magnificence that continued to distinguish her temples and her ritual, there was this melancholy motto on all her observances—"the glory hath departed." But during all this time, even when "the world wondered after the beast," our

Lord Jesus had his Church of faithful saints scattered here and there through the benighted regions of the Antichristian earth. He maintained, in various places, a succession of witnesses for his truths—few, it might be, in number, and greatly unknown to each other, but faithful to him, and to “the word of his patience.” In our own isles of the sea, for example, as well as on the Continent of Europe, he raised up, from generation to generation, a number of resolute and holy men, who cleaved to him when all around them had forsaken him, and, in their own little spheres preserved the light of the glorious gospel, when the surrounding world was involved in darkness. In a very special manner, the Lord Jesus Christ had his testimony in the ages of darkness among the memorable people known by the name of the Waldenses. Dwelling in the deep, sequestered vallies of the Alps, unheeded by the rest of the world, and having little intercourse with other people, these witnesses for God preserved during many ages the purity of Christian truth and worship, and defiled not themselves with the abominations of Rome. Persecution, it is true, entered at length the peaceful retreats of this simple people; surrounding princes were with ungodly zeal excited against them—army after army assailed them—till at last the greater part of them were exterminated, and the few who remained driven into strange lands, where they wept over the desolations of Zion, and and cried to Him who is the “refuge of the oppress-

ed," that he would arise and plead his own cause. But even this exterminating persecution was overruled for good. For by means of these witnesses for Christ, when expelled from the land of their fathers, the testimony of Jesus was extended to other lands, and the light which they scattered abroad was no unimportant mean of introducing the blessed reformation.*

* In these notices we are furnished with an answer to the scornful question with which Popish writers have been accustomed (as they thought, unanswerably) to assail their Protestant opponents—"Where was your religion before the days of Luther." If by our religion are meant its sublime and holy doctrines, we reply—they were (where *theirs* are not to be found) IN THE BIBLE. Or, if by our religion are meant those who publicly maintained it, we reply—they were to be found among the illustrious and holy men, who, in the successive periods of the Papal reign, and in various parts of Europe, lifted up their testimony against the abominations of Rome. They were to be found, especially, among the Culdees in Ireland and the Scottish isles, among the Lollards in England and Germany, the disciples of John Huss and Jerome of Prague in Bohemia, the Albigenses in France, and the Waldenses in the vallies of Piedmont. These were the confessors of Christian truth in the days of Popish darkness and apostacy. They kept the doctrines and institutions of Christianity pure, when they were utterly lost in the Church which professed to be their depository and guardian; and visited though they were with the terrible inflictions of Papal wrath, "having trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings, and bonds, and imprisonments, being stoned, sawn asunder, slain with the sword, and

II. Under all the darkness and persecution of the Papal reign, the faithful people of Christ were supported and cheered by the prophecies of Holy Scripture, which assured them that the deliverance of the Church was approaching. If the apostacy, tyranny, and persecution of the Church of Rome had come on the disciples of Christ, without any intimation being given them of these things before-hand, and without any assurance of the ultimate overthrow of the Antichristian power, such a disastrous and unlooked-for visitation would have been apt to break down their courage, to wear out their patience, and to induce them to say, with Zion of old, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me."—But this was not permitted to be. In mercy to his Church, the Redeemer had before-hand revealed to his servants "the things which must shortly come to pass." He knew the dangers with which his cause was to be menaced in the latter days, and what a stumbling-block they would prove to his people, and how they would, in some instances, induce the des-

doomed to wander in deserts, in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth,"—they were those "of whom the world was not worthy,"—they were honoured of God to maintain a testimony for his cause until the times of Reformation,—“they overcame through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony,”—and they are now inheriting the conqueror's crown.

ponding apprehension that their Master's interest was utterly overwhelmed ; and therefore, as an antidote to every thing of this kind, he placed in their hands the lamp of prophecy, to be their light and their comfort amid all the darkness and sorrow of their future history,—to let them see that on high, above all the clouds that might impend over the Church, her Head was enthroned, regulating their movements, and letting loose or restraining their storms as might best conduce to His glory and her advantage,—and to assure them that the blissful period was determined when he would arise, overthrow his adversaries, and “ make the place of his feet glorious.”—This light of divine prophecy has been the joy of the Church in all the past days of her suffering state,—under its guidance she has even gloried in tribulation—and her martyred confessors have been gladdened by it amid torture and death, for it taught them to anticipate a time when “ the Man of Sin ” would be consumed, and great Babylon would “ come into remembrance before God.”

This, my friends, is the subject to which I propose, at this time, to direct your attention ; and I have enlarged in these introductory remarks more than I would otherwise have done, in order to impress your minds with its importance. Whatever may be the sentiments and feelings of men estranged from vital religion—immersed in secularity, and alive only to

the little interests of a world that will soon pass away, —there is no true Christian—no man who really loves the Redeemer, and seeks the prosperity and glory of his kingdom—to whom the approaching **DESTINY OF PAPAL ROME** can be any other than a subject of deep interest. For, next to the advent of Christ—the accomplishment of the great promise given to the fathers, it will be the most signal manifestation of divine faithfulness that ever has been given,—it will be the most glorious “coming” of Christ, on behalf of his kingdom, that will be beheld till “the time of the consummation of all things,”—it will be the introduction of the most splendid era of prosperity that the Church of the Redeemer has ever enjoyed. Prophets, apostles, and martyrs, glorified in heaven, anxiously expect it, and will rejoice over it with rapturous exultation ; it occupies a place in the pleadings and in the expectation of our ascended Intercessor ; and the mind even of the blessed God dwells on it with joy, as the fulfilment of many of his purposes and promises, and as an eminent display of the glory of his beloved Son. In such an event, what Christian does not feel a deep interest ? For such an event, what Christian does not pray ? And in contemplating such an event—described in the sublime symbols of holy writ—what Christian is there who does not experience joy ?

In discoursing to you respecting **PROSPECTS** of the Church of Rome, I would call your attention to the following remarks.

I.—THE PAPAL SYSTEM IS DIVINELY DOOMED TO BE OVERTHROWN.

The overthrow of the Papacy is an event which, independently of prophecy, might be expected to take place in due time. It would be contrary to every notion which we are warranted to entertain of the character of God, to suppose that a system which stands forth in such avowed contradiction to his revealed will, and to the benevolent designs of his providential government, would be permitted always to exist and to prosper in the earth. It is the divine purpose, that the religion of Jesus Christ shall be universally disseminated, and that depraved man shall be thereby renewed, and human society purified and exalted ; and as the Antichristian system is the chief of those devices by which the adversary of God seeks to frustrate his gracious designs, it must in one mode or other, be removed out of the way.

When we contemplate the expressive symbols under which the Papal system is represented in Holy Scripture, we are led to expect that it will be visited with utter destruction. On account of its pre-eminent wickedness, it is termed "Sodom;" and the application of this name induces us to suppose, that, like the profligate "city of the plain," it is destined to ruin. On account of its relentless and persevering oppression of the Church of God, it is termed "Egypt;" and the inference is not unnatural, that, like the strength of Egypt, its power and influence shall ex-

perience a decisive overthrow. On account of its proud, idolatrous, licentious, and persecuting character, it is called by the name of "Babylon;" and, resembling "the glory of the Chaldees" in its character, it will resemble it also in its end. Nor, I apprehend, is it without emphatic reference to the *doom* of the Papacy, that it is termed by Paul, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, "the son of perdition." This appellation is no doubt intended to express the agency of the Papal system in leading multitudes of souls to everlasting destruction; but, unquestionably, it has especial respect to its own approaching ruin. Only in another part of Holy Scripture does the term in question occur,* and there it is applied to the betrayer of our Lord. He perished in his treachery and hypocrisy, and "went to his own place." And, like its prototype—Judas, this great system of hypocritical perfidy against Christ, is destined, in its appointed time, to "go into perdition."

The doom which we would thus be led to anticipate as awaiting Antichristian Rome is explicitly predicted in holy writ. "The judgment shall sit," says the Prophet Daniel, foretelling the overthrow of the Antichristian "horn," "and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."† "Whom," says the Apostle Paul, after enumerating the marks of Antichrist, and the signs of his coming, "whom the Lord shall consume with the

* John, xvii. 12.

† Dan. vii. 26.

spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."* "And after these things," says the beloved disciple, recording the visions of Patmos, "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."—"And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."† In such solemn and explicit announcements as these is the doom of Babylon declared. An overthrow more fearful and decisive than she has ever yet experienced awaits her, and no power or policy will avail to prevent its infliction. The sentence has gone forth against her from on high, and the Omnipotent hath pledged his faithfulness and truth for its infliction. "Hath He said it, and shall he not do it? Hath He spoken it, and shall it not come to pass?"

II.—THE OVERTHROW OF MYSTICAL BABYLON WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED, PARTLY BY THE CONVERTING GRACE, AND PARTLY BY THE AWFUL JUDGMENTS OF THE MOST HIGH.

In the memorable prophecy to which I have already referred, (2 Thes. ii. 8.) we are told that "the man

* Thess. ii. 28.

† Rev. xviii. 1. 2. 21.

of sin" the "son of perdition"—shall be "*consumed* with the spirit of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming." By "the spirit of his mouth" we are, doubtless, to understand that word of the gospel, which is "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—This is the great instrument which "Messiah the Prince," has employed in extending his kingdom, and achieving his glorious triumphs among the children of men; and the apostolic prediction just referred to warrants us to believe that this instrument shall, in the latter days, be successfully employed against the Antichristian cause. Inroads shall be made on its territories, and it shall be weakened and wasted, in the withdrawal of many of its adherents through the potent efficacy of the Word of God.—But while Babylon is destined to be thus "consumed," we are assured, in the same prophecy that the *total destruction* of the Antichristian system and power will be "with the brightness of the Lord's coming." This expression does not refer to "the glorious appearance" of our Saviour at the day of final retribution—for, before that event Antichrist shall have been overthrown, and a thousand years of prosperity enjoyed by the Church. Neither has it respect to any personal appearance that our Redeemer will make before the day of judgment

—for, we are certain from Holy Scripture, there will be no such event. “The heavens must retain him till the times of the restitution of all things,” when “he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father,” and introduce his redeemed Church into her perfect and everlasting state. But by “the brightness of our Lord’s coming,” in this prophecy, seems to be intended his appearance in those signal dispensations of his providence, whereby, amid the tremendous convulsions of the kingdoms of the Roman “earth,” his great adversary shall be destroyed. In this sense—as referring to the operations of Christ in his providential government—is “his coming” frequently spoken of in Holy Scripture.—“The coming of the Lord draweth nigh,” says the Apostle James, alluding to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was then at hand.* In this sense, too, is the phrase employed by John in that memorable and sublime prediction, in which, with his view fixed on the whole splendid series of visions he had beheld in Patmos, he announces the approaching overthrow of Heathen and Antichristian Rome, and the gathering again of long-impenitent and rejected Israel.—“Behold, *he cometh* with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.”† And there is manifest propriety in this use of the phrase. Wheresoever our exalted

* James v. 8.

† Rev. i. 7.

Saviour accomplishes his wondrous works—of mercy or judgment—there he may be said *to come* ; there in the manifestation of his power and grace, he is as really present as if visibly displayed before the eyes of mankind. In this sense, therefore, the phrase seems to be employed in the prophecy of Paul on which I have been remarking. Mystical Babylon—“ the man of sin, and son of perdition ”—shall be “ consumed with the spirit of the Lord’s mouth,” and “ destroyed with the brightness of his coming.”—Many of the deluded adherents of the Antichristian system shall, by the preaching of the glorious gospel, be rescued from its power, and made partakers of that enlightening and redeeming grace, which “ hath abounded to sinners through Jesus Christ ” ; but the system itself—the hierarchy of Rome, as a great spiritual and temporal despotism—shall sink into merited and predicted ruin amid the tremendous and desolating judgments of the Most High.

With this view of the destiny of Papal Rome, given under divine inspiration by the Apostle Paul, that which we find detailed in the visions of the Apocalypse entirely harmonizes. My text, indeed, exhibits the symbol of a violent and *wrathful* overthrow, and is referable, accordingly, to the latter part of Paul’s prediction ; but in a preceding vision of this book, we are informed of a “ fall ” of Babylon, which will be accomplished by other means. “ I saw,” says John, “ another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting

gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,—saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to Him, for the hour of his judgment is come ; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.—And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen—that great city—because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”*

This prophecy, it is generally agreed, began to receive its fulfilment at the period of the Reformation. A succession of evangelical messengers appeared in the Church, symbolized in the vision by “heaven.” They appeared denouncing the idolatries of Rome, and proclaiming that pure and blessed gospel which, under the preceding reign of the Papacy, had been almost unknown. Like the primitive apostles of Christianity, they were comparatively few in number, “as the gleanings of the vintage, a few berries on the top of the uppermost bough.” And, like them, they were for the most part destitute of external support, and opposed by a power, that, for ages, had made the nations tremble. But, like them, in the might of an invisible arm, they triumphed over frowns, persecutions, and death in its gloomiest forms, and achieved the rescue of multitudes from the power of Satan, and the gathering of thousands in

* Rev. xiv. 6—8.

many lands to the faith of Christ. Then Babylon fell. Her battlements, that had defied the fury of many a storm, sunk down overthrown before the power of the gospel, as in ancient time the walls of Jericho fell before the sound of the trumpets of Israel. And, my brethren, the memorable prediction just referred to, is still continuing to receive its fulfilment. The "angel" in the vision is, unquestionably, the representative—not of any one of the heralds of the pure gospel—but of that succession of them which, in opposition to the soul-ruining doctrines of Rome, will continue, till the time of her final overthrow, to preach the unadulterated words of everlasting life. Under their ministry is the prophecy obtaining progressive fulfilment. It is fulfilled in any inroads that are made on the dreary territories of Popery—in any exposures that are given of the unscriptural character and destructive tendency of its doctrines—and in any conversions "from the error of their way" that are effected among its disciples. And it will continue to be thus fulfilled, until all the people of God shall be gathered out of Babylon, and sheltered, like Noah in the ark, from the impending storm.

I am led by this last expression, however, to remark, that it will not be, solely, in the way at which we have been glancing, that the overthrow of the Papal system will be accomplished. In mercy will God bring to repentance and salvation many of its disciples, but in awful wrath will he at last deal with

the system itself, and with its impenitent adherents. For, in connexion with the prophetic vision whose import I have been endeavouring to explain, we must regard the vision delineated in my text:—"A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus, with violence, shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." The full import of this sublime vision time only will declare. But, without pretending to unfold the precise circumstances amid which great Babylon will be plunged into ruin, I apprehend we are warranted to assert, that her overthrow will be effected by the arm of violence, and under the awful tokens of God's indignation.—'Twice on the inhabitants of the Roman "earth" has there already fallen a terrible, predicted "woe." They have been made to experience the fearful and protracted demonstrations of divine displeasure. But they have not repented. These visitations have produced no auspicious change of mind in the great body of the members of the Antichristian apostacy.* Wherefore, a "third woe," more terrible than any of the former, and comprehending "the last plagues of the wrath of God" is denounced against them,† and under its varied dispensations shall the ruin of the Antichristian system be accomplished. The scenes and circumstances of this woe are wrapt

* Rev. ix. 20, 21.

† Rev. xi. 14.

up in the darkness of futurity, and the event alone will enable us to explain with accuracy the symbols under which they are described ; but of their accomplishment, in due time, we are assured. One wrathful vial after another shall be poured forth on the Antichristian state, until Papal, like Pagan Rome, shall live only in the pages of the historian, and in the recollection of mankind.

Although it is not for us to say what second causes the great administrator of providence will employ, in accomplishing the remaining part of his purposes respecting mystical Babylon, one circumstance of importance is made known to us—that her overthrow shall be effected through the instrumentality of those very powers of the earth by whom she has been befriended and supported. “The ten horns upon the beast are ten kings—these have one mind—give their power and strength to the beast, and make war with the Lamb,”—but these same ten horns “shall hate” the mother of abominations—“shall make her desolate and naked—shall eat her flesh—and burn her with fire.* Have we not, my brethren, beheld, in our own time, something of this kind, at least in reference to one of the kingdoms of the Roman “earth.” Have we not beheld France—one of the main pillars of the Papal state—exchange Popery for infidelity, and become instrumental in reducing the head of the Papal Church to the

* Rev. xvii. 10—16.

lowest pitch of degradation? And although the wound thus inflicted on the Antichristian interest has been healed, and the kingdom of France again associated with other states under the banner of Catholicism, it is far from being unlikely, that infidelity may continue to spread in Popish lands, and that, in consequence of some new and arrogant pretensions being set forth by Papal Rome, they may array themselves against her, and become the instruments of her destruction. At all events, the language of the prediction is decisive on this point—that the overthrow of mystical Babylon will be accomplished in a way of wrath, and that he whose glory she has profaned, and whose Church she has oppressed, will employ the powers of the earth, who have been for many ages her devoted allies, as the ministers of his vengeance against her.

I am aware that there are many persons in the religious world whose sentiments, respecting the future overthrow of the Antichristian state, are different from those which I have now expressed. They imagine that that great event will be accomplished entirely by the power and the triumph of truth;—that the disciples of Popery will be gradually brought to see and forsake their errors and idolatries, and to embrace the pure gospel of Christ, and the worship of the “living and true God;”—and that thus, silently and slowly, the “mystery of iniquity” which has so long polluted the world, will be utterly consumed. Nay, it is perhaps not unknown to some of you, that a writer of

high note in the theological world, has put it forth as a supposable case, that the converting and regenerating grace of the spirit of God may reach the hearts of the whole Catholic priesthood, and of the Pope himself, and that, with its name, and form, and institutions unchanged, the hierarchy of Rome may then become a mighty instrument in building up the kingdom of God, and in throwing down the kingdom of Satan, throughout all the territories of Catholic Christendom! Now, my brethren, I cannot but wonder that Christian men, with the Christian revelation in their hands, should, even for a moment, entertain such dreams as these. If, indeed, no light had been thrown by divine prophecy on the destiny of Rome, it might have been allowable for us to speculate respecting it ;—although, for my own part, even in that case, I could not have regarded it as at all likely, that such a great public adversary of God and of his Church would have been permitted to expire, without some signal and judicial manifestation of divine displeasure against it. But light *has* been thrown on this interesting subject. In mercy to his Church, the Most High *has* intimated, in no ambiguous terms, the doom which awaits his Antichristian foe ; and, informed of his designs in the prophetic record, we are not at liberty to wander on the point, into the regions of uncertain conjecture. He has told us that there is a season during which he will exercise mysterious forbearance with “ the mystery of iniquity ;” but he has assured us, at the same

time, that a season of exterminating wrath will succeed. He has warranted us to expect that, in these latter days, the majesty of Christian truth will, under the influence of the Spirit of God, obtain many a triumph over Antichristian error, and that not a few of the votaries of Popery will be rescued from its power, and brought into the way of everlasting life. But he has as explicitly and solemnly declared, that the Antichristian system itself shall perish amid the fearful manifestations of his judicial displeasure. No, my brethren, whatever changes may pass over the Papacy, affecting the extent of its dominions, or the number of its subjects, there is not the slightest ground to hope that either the Papal hierarchy, or the body of the Roman Church, will be reformed. Investigate her prospects, under the guidance—not of the feeble and unsteady light of human reason and conjecture—but of that lamp of prophecy, which “has borrowed its splendour from the throne of God and the Lamb,” and you will not behold so much as one ray of spiritual light or scriptural hope gilding her horizon. No other light will meet your eye, than “the fierce glare of the distant lightnings—the harbingers of that tempest of wrath which will overwhelm Babylon with irretrievable destruction.” And no other sound will fall upon your ear, than that which announces her awful doom—“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.”

And, my brethren, it cannot escape our observation, that, in the latter part of my text, the tremen-

dous overthrow of Papal Rome is exhibited as a necessary display of the retributive justice of God:— “In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”— It appears to be an essential principle in the moral government of God, that the vengeance of heaven shall follow those men who, with malevolent hearts, imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-men.* And, when innocent blood is shed, not by individuals merely, but by communities, it seems peculiarly fit, that vengeance should, in the course of divine providence, be inflicted on these communities in *this* world, independently of that account which every guilty individual must give for himself at the bar of God. For, as it is only in this world that communities exist in their collective capacity, it is in this world only that they can be punished in their public character. The history of the Jews clearly shews that divine vengeance is come upon them as a people, or collective body, for the blood of the prophets, and especially for the blood of “The Just One.” Their city, temple, and kingdom, have all been destroyed, with evident marks of divine indignation, and they have long been scattered through every kingdom of the world, while they have no kingdom of their own.†

* Gen. ix. 5. 6.

† This view of the judgments that are to be poured forth on Antichristian Rome is well illustrated in Johnston’s “Commentary,” Vol. 1. pp. 194—205.

Now there is the guilt of much "righteous blood," on the Antichristian Church. It is not merely true that individuals of her communion have persecuted the faithful servants of God—she has practised and sanctioned persecution as a Church. Professing to be "the Spouse of Christ," she has nevertheless "shed the blood of his saints like water," and is accordingly represented in the inspired prophecy as "intoxicated with their blood."—"A calculation of the sufferings inflicted by the secular "beast" upon the saints over all the nations of christendom, would astonish the world. Probably not less than fifteen millions of men have lost their lives for their attachment to the truth, and their opposition to heresy, since the rise of Antichrist. Were all the *saints* in christendom to be slain on the present day, it would not equal the number of the martyrs against the man of sin, who have already "sealed their testimony with their blood."*

* A million of the Waldenses perished in France: nine hundred thousand of the orthodox suffered in 30 years after the institution of the order of the Jesuits: the Duke of Alva boasted of having put 36,000 to death in the Netherlands, by the hands of the common executioner. In 30 years, the Inquisition destroyed a hundred and fifty thousand. In France, during 50 years, from 1530 to 1580, a million of Protestants lost their lives; Charles XII. glorying in his letters to the Pope, that he had massacred 70,000 in a few days! At the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, by Lewis

The martyrs of Christ under Popery sought not revenge. They died with their Lord's intercession in their lips—"Father forgive them, they know not what they do." But their blood, like that of "righteous Abel," calls aloud for vengeance. "I saw," says John, "under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" And the solemn appeal made by their

XIV. it is computed that a hundred thousand were murdered, and a million driven from their country. Before the States of Holland established their independence, there were put to death, in the reign of Charles V., about 50,000; in the succeeding fifteen years about a hundred thousand; and more than half a million fled their country. How many more must have fallen in the war for religion and liberty which they waged, with few intermissions, for almost 80 years! Besides those who were put to death in the early persecutions in Scotland, Charles II. and James II. involved the Protestant throne of England in the blood of the martyrs, in their attempts to restore the nation to the communion of the Church of Rome. About 2000 of the most eminent ministers in England, and 300 of the most faithful in Scotland, were driven from their charges, and tortured or murdered. Two hundred thousand families were reduced to poverty; and above 60,000 persons in England, and 18,000 in Scotland, suffered either banishment or death.

Brown's Church History.

ployed for the purpose of delusive fascination: The goodly arts of painting and statuary she has prostituted, like the pagans of the ancient world, into subservience to her idolatry. And, like them, even at noon-day, does she decorate with lighted candles the temples of her superstition, and the tombs of her departed saints. But all this scene of idolatrous illusion will ere long pass away. The voice of music shall be heard in her no more. The skill of the artist shall be needed by her no more. The burning taper shall illuminate the scenes of her idolatry no more. The darkness of oblivion shall close over her institutions, her influence, and all her glory; and nought shall be heard of her save the loud wail of her impenitent minions, and the high gratulations wherewith the servants of God will celebrate her fall.

But this is not all. It is intimated, I apprehend, in the verses before us, that, in token of God's displeasure against the great Antichristian power, the city which has been its peculiar seat—where its throne has stood—and whence its unhallowed decrees have been issued forth, will be converted into a scene of utter desolation. The prophecies of the Old Testament against Chaldean Babylon, had reference, you are aware, not merely to the passing away of her power, greatness, and glory, but to her total ruin as a city.—“I will rise up against them,” said God by his prophet, denouncing Babylon's doom, “and I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant,

and son, and nephew, saith the LORD. And I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts."—"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, nor shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: Her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged*. In such fearful terms did the God of Israel announce the doom of his people's ancient oppressor: and these predictions have been fulfilled—not merely in the destruction of Babylon's power by Cyrus, and her progressive debasement into one of the meanest cities of the world—but *literally*—Yes, literally; for that great city Babylon, which was once "the glory of kingdoms," and the wonder of the world, whose strength, extent, beauty, magnificence, rendered it inconceivably superior to every other that has ever existed,—that great city has become the prey of utter desolation. Not a

* Isa. xix. 22, 23, and chap. xiii. 19—22.

played for the purpose of **delusive** fascinating arts of painting and **statuary** she has used, like the pagans of the **ancient** world, in vidence to her idolatry. And, **like** them, every day, does she decorate with **lighted** candles the temples of her superstition, and the tombs of her saints. But all this scene of idolatrous illusions ere long pass away. The voice of music heard in her no more. The skill of the artists to be needed by her no more. The burning torches to illuminate the scenes of her idolatry no more. The darkness of oblivion shall close over her in her influence, and all her glory; and nought shall be heard of her save the loud wail of her minions, and the high gratulations wherewith the servants of God will celebrate her fall.

But this is not all. It is intimated, I believe, in the verses before us, that, in token of triumph and pleasure against the great Antichristian **ROMAN** CITY which has been its peculiar seat—its throne has stood—and whence its unhallowed edicts have been issued forth, will be converted into a place of utter desolation. The prophecies of the Old Testament against **Chaldea** and **Babylon**, had you are aware, were fulfilled.

and son, and nephew, saith the LORD. And I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts."—"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, nor shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: Her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged*. In such fearful terms did the God of Israel announce the doom of his people's ancient oppressor: and these predictions have been fulfilled—not merely in the destruction of Babylon's power by Cyrus, and her progressive debasement into one of the meanest cities of the world—but *literally*—Yes, literally; for that great city Babylon, which was once "the glory of kingdoms," and the wonder of the world, whose strength, extent, beauty, magnificence, rendered it inconceivably superior to every other that has ever existed,—that great city has become the prey of utter desolation. Not a

* Isa. xix. 22, 23, and chap. xiii. 19—22.

trace of its splendour, not even a vestige of its existence is now to be found. Its palaces, towers, temples, are mouldered into dust, or sunk into a morass; and so completely has the word of the prophet been fulfilled, that the place where it stood, infested with venomous beasts, cannot be approached. And thus it must remain for ever; for it is doomed by divine decree "never to be inhabited from generation to generation."

Thus, my brethren, I have no doubt, will Babylon's antitype perish. Her ecclesiastical greatness will be destroyed—all the orders of her proud and profligate hierarchy will be abolished—and her idolatrous worship, with all the multitude of her other abominations, will be covered with the mantle of everlasting oblivion. But this not all. A brand of infamy—a seal of divine indignation will be indelibly impressed on the very spot which, for so many hundred years, has been polluted as the chief seat—the peculiar dwelling place of "the man of sin." ROME will become the scene of awful and utter desolation described in my text. Mirth and joy will dwell in her no more. Busy commerce will forsake her. Industry and trade will perish out of her. She will cease to be the habitation of man, and will remain, from generation, to to generation, a spot blasted by the curse of heaven, and devoted to unbroken silence and perpetual gloom.*

* See Appendix No. VI.

IV.—THE FINAL OVERTHROW OF MYSTICAL BABYLON, WILL BE AN EVENT FULL OF JOY TO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

During the melancholy period of the Old-Testament captivity, the people of God were overwhelmed with sorrow, hung their harps on the willows by the river of Babylon, and sent up their mournful cry before him who is “the refuge of the oppressed:”—“O God,” they said, “the heathen are come into thine inheritance, thy holy temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem in heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. How long, Lord, wilt thou be angry? Will thy jealousy burn like fire?”*—But, “when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,” they were “like men that dreamed.” “Their mouth was filled with laughter, and their tongue with praise.” They said,—“The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.”†—All this was a type of what was to take place under the New-Testament Economy. During the prevalence of the Antichristian power, the Church was driven into the wilderness, and “the souls of the martyrs, who were slain for the testimony of Jesus,” are represented as uttering this expostulation—“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our

* Ps. lxxix. 1—5. † Ps. cxxvi. 1—3.

blood on them that dwell on the earth." But when Papal Rome shall be finally cast down from her greatness, and all her persecutions ended, and all her corruptions and idolatries blotted out of the world, the people of God will rejoice, and will utter a more rapturous and triumphant song than ever has been heard in the militant Church. To this exercise, they are invited in the verse immediately preceding my text—"Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her." And in this exercise we find the prophetic symbol represents them as engaged:—On the sounding of "the seventh angel"—comprehending "the third woe," and the "seven vials" under whose effusion Antichrist is to be destroyed,—the "four and twenty elders"—representing the collective body of the people of Christ—"fall upon their faces before the throne," and, in humble acknowledgment of the mercy of God to his Church, and in adoration of his justice and faithfulness in punishing her foes, utter before him this eucharistic song—"We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small

and great, and shouldst destroy them who corrupt the earth.*

But, it may be said, is it consistent with the spirit of Christianity to rejoice over fallen adversaries, or to take delight in those awful judgments by which they are overthrown? Are not the people of Christ enjoined and constrained by the spirit of their benewolent faith to love their enemies, to bless those that curse them, to do good to those that hate them, and to pray for those who despitefully use them and persecute them? Yes, my brethren, and amid all the joy which the Church will express on the overthrow of Antichrist, there will not be the smallest departure from this sublime and amiable spirit. It is not in the judgments of God, abstractly regarded, that the Church will rejoice. It is not on account of the destruction or the misery even of her worst adversaries that she will utter her song of triumph, but because of the glory of her God which will be thereby manifested; and because of the happy consequences by which these judicial inflictions will be succeeded.—For,

I. The overthrow of Mystical Babylon—next to the advent of Christ—will be the most eminent display of the divine faithfulness that the Church has ever beheld. It will be the accomplishment of a multitude of promises and predictions—some of which

* Rev. xi. 15—18.

innocent blood to the holiness and veracity of God will not be disregarded. A short while they are bidden to rest, honoured and happy in the invisible world, until the number of their martyred fellow-servants and brethren shall be fulfilled; and then, when the iniquity of the persecuting power is completed, the judgment shall come. The wasting plagues, and the decisive overthrow which God will inflict on the Antichristian kingdom will be a public and striking manifestation of his holiness and truth, a vindication of the character and cause of his persecuted people, and a condemnation, before all the world, of the great and ungodly empire by which their blood has been shed. Regarded in this view, the judgments that are to be inflicted on Mystical Babylon appear altogether in accordance with the retributive character, and the holy government of God; and in this view, the Church is represented as adoring and rejoicing in them—"Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus: For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.*"

III.—THE OVERTHROW OF MYSTICAL BABYLON
WILL BE FINAL.

This seems to be intimated by the strongly empha-

* Rev. xvi. 5, 6.

tic symbol employed to represent it:—"A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, this with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown, and shall be found no more at all."—What action could more expressly denote final ruin than this? A millstone sunk in the mighty deep is irretrievably lost—consigned to oblivion; and thus shall it be with Babylon, when the judgments of the Almighty have passed over her—she shall sink to rise no more.

The same thing seems to be intimated in the very graphic description of Babylon's desolation contained in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses:—"And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee."—These verses unquestionably portray a scene of utter and perpetual ruin. They tell us, in the first place, that Babylon's approaching overthrow will include the total extinction of her ecclesiastical state, and the abolition of her whole system of idolatry and superstition. Pomp and magnificence, unknown in the ordinances of Jesus Christ, have characterised her institutions. The high charms of music she has em-

ployed for the purpose of delusive fascination: The goodly arts of painting and statuary she has prostituted, like the pagans of the ancient world, into subservience to her idolatry. And, like them, even at noon-day, does she decorate with lighted candles the temples of her superstition, and the tombs of her departed saints. But all this scene of idolatrous illusion will ere long pass away. The voice of music shall be heard in her no more. The skill of the artist shall be needed by her no more. The burning taper shall illuminate the scenes of her idolatry no more. The darkness of oblivion shall close over her institutions, her influence, and all her glory; and nought shall be heard of her save the loud wail of her impenitent minions, and the high gratulations wherewith the servants of God will celebrate her fall.

But this is not all. It is intimated, I apprehend, in the verses before us, that, in token of God's displeasure against the great Antichristian power, the city which has been its peculiar seat—where its throne has stood—and whence its unhallowed decrees have been issued forth, will be converted into a scene of utter desolation. The prophecies of the Old Testament against Chaldean Babylon, had reference, you are aware, not merely to the passing away of her power, greatness, and glory, but to her total ruin as a city.—“I will rise up against them,” said God by his prophet, denouncing Babylon's doom, “and I will cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant,

and son, and nephew, saith the LORD. And I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts."—"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, nor shall the shepherds make their fold there; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: Her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged*. In such fearful terms did the God of Israel announce the doom of his people's ancient oppressor: and these predictions have been fulfilled—not merely in the destruction of Babylon's power by Cyrus, and her progressive debasement into one of the meanest cities of the world—but *literally*—Yes, literally; for that great city Babylon, which was once "the glory of kingdoms," and the wonder of the world, whose strength, extent, beauty, magnificence, rendered it inconceivably superior to every other that has ever existed,—that great city has become the prey of utter desolation. Not a

* Isa. xix. 22, 23, and chap. xiii. 19—22.

points of the glorious nation which they once were !
“ Expatriated and plundered for the long period of eighteen hundred years, they have earned their bread from under the feet of those to whom the writings of their fathers reveal the will of heaven, and impart the gladdening hopes of immortal life.” Their magnificent city has become the prey of the spoiler—their splendid ritual is abolished—the sceptre is departed from Judah, and the glory from Israel—and the sons of Jacob—the countrymen of David, and Solomon, and the holy Prophets—“ are scattered, and peeled, and driven under every wind of heaven, without a nation or country to call their own—unamalgamated, persecuted, and plundered—like the ruins of some blighted tower, whose fragments remain to show the might of the power that smote it, and to call aloud to heaven and earth for repair.” But the time of their restoration draweth nigh. For thus saith the faithful record—“ The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an altar, and without an ephod, and without seraphim. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.”—
“ And I will take them from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land, and they

shall dwell there, even they, and their children's children for ever."*

III.—The overthrow of Mystical Babylon will be the immediate harbinger of the Millenium. It will be followed by the revival of religion in all the gentile churches—the destruction of all other systems of superstition and idolatry throughout the world—the shining forth of the light of Christian truth in unclouded glory over all lands—and a thousand years of unprecedented prosperity to the Church, during which, the gracious presence of the Redeemer will be eminently enjoyed, the cause and character of the martyrs signally revived and exalted, and the gospel of the kingdom made to “have free course and be glorified.”

These, my brethren, are the grounds of the joy which the Church will experience on the accomplishment of Babylon's overthrow ; and, when we think of such splendid events as these, ushered in by that overthrow, we surely do not wonder that she should rejoice. If we are Christians indeed, we will be glad even in the distant anticipation of them, and will feel, in looking forward to them from amid all that is dark and cheerless in the present circumstances of the Church and the world, a holy and sublime joy, kindred to that which the raptured patriarch felt when he beheld the Saviour's day “afar off, and was glad.”

* Hos. iii. 4, 5.

BUT when shall these things be? How long will it be ere this great triumph of truth and righteousness shall be obtained, and the most auspicious age in the history of our fallen world shall commence? Is it likely that we shall inherit the blessing which in Holy Scripture is pronounced on those by whom by it shall be beheld?—These are questions which it is very natural for us to propose in relation to the great event which we have been contemplating. For, in the very constitution of our nature, there is a principle that excites us to seek to have the veil of futurity drawn aside, and its events before hand disclosed to us. And, as Christians, our love to the Redeemer, and our desire to behold his Church in prosperity, prompt us to wish the near approach of those “times of refreshing” which inspired prophecy has announced. Without professing to give a decisive answer to these questions, or intending to enter minutely into this part of our subject, I remark

V.—THE TIME OF BABYLON’S RUIN IS DIVINELY FIXED.

In Holy Scripture, we read of “a time to favour Zion,” even “a set time;” and in relation to all her seasons of suffering, we are assured that there *is* such “a time” fixed in the counsels, and in many in-

* Dan. xii. 12:

stances made known in the promises of the Most High. There was an appointed time for the continuance of the Church under Egyptian oppression.* A precise period was fixed and announced for the duration of the captivity in Babylon.† And, in like manner, the time of the continuance of the Antichristian apostacy, and of the wilderness-condition of the Church, is fixed in the divine purpose, and very particularly made known in the revelations of the word of God. Without alluding to the Book of Daniel, in which the same subject is introduced, I shall quote to you one or two of the passages in this book, in which it is declared—“And there was given unto me,” says John, “a reed like unto a rod, and the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand, two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.”—“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand, two hundred and three-score days.”—“And there was given unto him (the “beast with seven heads and ten horns”) a mouth speaking

* Gen. xv. 13. † Jer. xxv. 12.

great things and blasphemies, and power was given to him to continue and make war forty and two months."* It is needless to spend time in showing that these periods—the forty and two months' treading down of the holy city, and blasphemy and war of the beast, and the thousand, two hundred, and threescore days' dwelling of the Church in the wilderness, and prophesying of the witnesses, are contemporaneous, or rather are indeed one and the same. They all denote the time during which the Antichristian power was to exist, and the Church to remain in a state of exile, and of more or less violent persecution. From the time of the prediction respecting the "seventy weeks," it became usual in prophetic style, to put a day for a year; and, accordingly, the "three years and a half," the "forty and two months," and the "twelve hundred and sixty days," all intimate a period of twelve hundred and sixty years, which is therefore the determined time of Antichrist's continuance on the throne.

Thus far the investigation is easy and decisive; but when we attempt to penetrate farther into these prophetic revelations, we find ourselves involved in difficulties, and surrounded with darkness. We have, indeed, a definite period of duration, but we have no date distinctly declared from which to mark its commencement. It is evident that the 1260 days are the

* Rev. xi. 1—3. xii. 6. xiii. 5.

time of the Antichristian reign, but we have no precise notice of the period from which the computation is to be made. Accordingly, commentators on the prophecies are found to differ much among themselves, in their opinions respecting the period when "the man of sin" shall be finally destroyed. Some calculate from the time when Constantine established Christianity throughout the empire, and assigned undue and unscriptural honours to the Bishop of Rome; and, according to their opinion, the 1260 years expired about the middle of the sixteenth century, when the light and the triumphs of the blessed Reformation were spreading rapidly abroad among the nations of Europe. Others date the commencement of the 1260 days from the beginning of the seventh century, when the spiritual supremacy of the Roman Church was established by the investiture of the Bishop of Rome with the title of Universal Bishop. According to this class of interpreters, the reign of Antichrist will be fully terminated in about 36 years from this present time. Last of all, other writers on prophecy fix the commencement of the period in question at the year 756, when the secular dominion of Rome was established, in the appointment of its Bishop to be a temporal prince. Of course, according to this latter view, the final overthrow of the Antichristian power will not take place till the commencement of the seventh thousand years of the world's existence.

It ought to be considered, in relation to the ob-

scurity in which the prophetic numbers are involved, that a disclosure of dates was not to be expected in Holy Scripture. It was not proper, that a religion intended for all nations should be encumbered with any such specialities as the recognition of a particular system of human chronology. Besides, a minute revelation of "the times and the seasons" would have put it in the power of the enemies of revelation maliciously to attempt to frustrate the predictions, and thus render extraordinary interpositions of Providence necessary; and the friends of revelation, on the other hand, might have been induced imprudently to endeavour to favour their accomplishment, and thus weaken the argument from prophecy, and render the hand of God less conspicuous in its fulfilment. In short, a precise disclosure of dates in Scripture would have greatly superseded the necessity of studying prophecy, and comparing it with the events of the times.

But, if there be such obscurity resting on the terms of duration specified in Holy Scripture—are they of use? Of much. They intimate to the Church that the predicted events shall certainly take place. They cherish her hope. And they ensure a most ample and striking attestation of the truth of prophecy in due time. "As the event will, when it takes place, sufficiently ascertain the time foretold, it will furnish the needful assistance for calculating backwards to the commencement of the term. Thus Providence

will prove the interpreter, and correct all the mistakes of human conjecture; it will discover the dates, and lay open the whole term of duration for being compared with history. It may seem that this is not a method of doing honour to prophecy in the eyes of infidels. But how can they reasonably object? The interpreting Providence will leave them in full possession of history, as the test to which they may bring the truth of the prediction. It will say—this year terminates the 1260 days; calculate now the commencement—fix the date where it falls—look back—examine the records of ages, and see if events have not justified the word of prophecy—if the state of things has not been such, under the specified term of duration from first to last, as was foretold.”*

With regard to the period of the overthrow of the Papacy, the first of the opinions to which I adverted does seem to be inconsistent with history. The state of the Church, since the Reformation, does not warrant us to conclude that Babylon the Great at that time experienced its final and decisive overthrow. Of the other two interpretations of the 1260 years, I humbly apprehend the last to be most agreeable to the prophetic record. For, although it is true, that in the year 606, the Bishop of Rome attained ecclesiastical supremacy, being titled Universal Bishop, yet

* See an excellent paper on this subject in the Christian Magazine. 2d series, vol. i. p. 5.

he could not be regarded as “a horn” among the ten, till he had attained secular authority and dominion among the nations of Europe. This was not the case till the year 756, when Pepin of France, then the most powerful monarch in Christendom, constituted the Bishop of Rome a secular prince, assigning him a large dominion ; after which, assuming temporal power, he subdued three kings or kingdoms, and they fell before him, according to the words of the prophecy of Daniel.* From which time if you date the 1260 years, their number will not be completed till the year of our Lord 2016—a hundred and eighty-seven years from this present time.

It must, however, have occurred to you, my brethren, in reading the history of the Old-Testament captivity, that, although its predicted period was seventy years, there were several remarkable stages both in its commencement and its termination. The first captivity, for example, took place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when Daniel, and many other of all classes of the Jews, were carried to Babylon ;† the last, by which the desolation of Judah was accomplished, took place in the reign of Zedekiah, when Jerusalem was taken, and the temple destroyed.‡ Now, corresponding to these eminent periods in Judah’s captivity—and at the distance of seventy years from each of them respectively—there were remarkable periods in

* Dan. vii. 8, 20, 24. † Dan. i. ‡ 2 Ch. xxxvi. 11, 21.

her deliverance. Seventy years after the commencement of the captivity in the reign of Jehoiakim, there came forth the celebrated edict of Cyrus, permitting the Jews to return to their own land, and authorizing the restoration of their city and temple.* And, after the lapse of seventy years from the destruction of Jerusalem in the time of Zedekiah, Darius Hydaspes published the remarkable decree, by which the rebuilding of the temple was revived after a great interruption, and in consequence of which it was completed.† Now, I apprehend the history of the Papacy will exhibit a similar scene. Its rise was gradual, and so, most probably, will be its overthrow. It was not in a moment that Mystical Babylon rose up to all that power and magnificence which astonished and awed the nations of the earth; neither will it be in a moment that she will sink into the tremendous desolation which is decreed against her. There were several remarkable periods in the rise of the “man of sin,” and there will probably be corresponding notable periods in his fall. About the middle of the third century (256) he began to rise to eminence—Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, aspiring after superiority over all his brethren; and, 1260 years thereafter, (1517) the blessed Reformation—the commencement of his overthrow—dawned on the world. In the beginning of the sixth century, during the reign of Justin (519), and more

* Ezra i.

† Ezra vi.

particularly under that of Justinian (533), the Bishop of Rome obtained a still more eminent increase of ecclesiastical power ; and, 1260 years after the latter period, the government of France became infidel, abolished Popery in their dominions, and reduced the head of the Pontifical Church to the lowest pitch of humiliation. In the year 606, under the Emperor Phocas, the Pope (Boniface III.) obtained the proud title of Universal Bishop, and the spiritual supremacy of Rome was established over all the western world. —Reasoning from analogy, I would expect that, 1260 years after the period just referred to, (about 1863), there would fall on the Popish interest some more eminent visitation of divine displeasure than it has hitherto experienced. But, as Mystical Babylon did not attain the fulness of her power and glory before the year 756, I apprehend it will not be till 1260 years from that period shall have elapsed, (about 2016) that she will sink in the flood of divine indignation to rise no more. Then will be fulfilled the vision of the vial of the seventh angel.* The “voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and the great earthquake, such as has not been since men were upon the earth,”—all these prophetic symbols will have received their tremendous fulfilment, “and great Babylon will come in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierce-

* Rev. xvi. 17—20.

ness of his wrath." The sufferings of the Church, like those of her blessed Redeemer, will be concluded with a shout of triumph—"there will come a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Then will commence the Church's jubilee—the reign of righteousness and peace and joy, which will not be interrupted by any storms during a thousand long and happy years.

But, is it not discouraging to the friends of the Lord Jesus, to think that the time of Zion's complete deliverance is deferred so long? Rather, my brethren, is it not ground of joy to think that the time of her deliverance draweth nigh—that now the dark and troubled years of her wilderness-condition are passing rapidly on to a close?—Is not the time which our God has fixed for showing mercy to Zion unquestionably the best—best for His glory, and for her interest? And is there any true Christian who would desire to obtain blessings, either for himself or for the Church, in any other than God's own time?—Moreover, may not the people of God derive joy from the anticipation of Babylon's overthrow, even although they should not live to behold it? Is not faith, in the experience of all believers, "the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for?" And, in the exercise of this noble grace, may they not look through intervening years and ages, and have fellowship with the Church that shall then be, in the triumphant song which she

will utter when the days of her tribulation are ended, and when Zion shall have become "a quiet habitation," a "sure resting place?" Did not the "father of the faithful" in this manner, thousands of years ago, glance through the long series of many generations, and behold the hallowed day when all nations were to be "blessed in Messiah," and to "call him blessed?"—Besides, are there not the steps of the Saviour's approach—the sublime movements of his providence towards the deliverance of Zion, which his people may be exercised in contemplating?—And, in short, may not Christians rest satisfied with the assurance, that although the overthrow of Antichrist, and the subsequent enlargement and prosperity of the Church should not take place in their times, they will learn and celebrate these events in the celestial world? Its blessed inhabitants are not unacquainted with the condition of the world they have left, nor are they unconcerned about their Redeemer's cause and glory there. If they rejoice in the conversion of one sinner—in the bringing back of one poor wanderer to his Father's house, with what emphasis of joy, may we conceive, will they rejoice, when the bright period shall have commenced on earth, during which the Destroyer shall be bound—error and wickedness repressed—the gospel preached and glorified in all lands—and their Saviour's name "great from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same!"

WHILE, however, my brethren, we are warranted confidently to anticipate the final overthrow of the Antichristian interest in due time, I cannot conclude this Discourse respecting the Prospects of the Roman Church, without expressing my apprehension, that, before the time of her final ruin, she will recover strength throughout Europe, and again persecute the saints of the Most High. I am aware that there are many persons by whom apprehension on this point is regarded with derision. A revival of the system of Popery, they treat as an idle chimera, and those they reckon enthusiasts who look on such an event as even possible. And, as indubitable securities in the case, they tell us of the progress of knowledge and intellectual freedom, the improved and exalted condition of society, and the liberal spirit that has gone forth among mankind. Alas! my brethren, these are the very topics on which the friends of Popery in this land declaimed in the beginning of the infamous reign immediately preceding the Revolution; and by their declamation was the country deluded, and lulled to slumber, till it found itself on the very brink of Popery, despotism, and ruin.

It is the opinion of some of the most eminent and judicious writers on prophecy, that the melaucholy state of matters intimated in the prediction respecting the slaughter of the witnesses, (Rev. xi. 7—10) is yet wrapt up in the darkness of futurity. Nothing, they think, at all corresponding to such an event, has yet

taken place in Christendom ; and, when it shall occur, Britain, they conceive, will be eminently the scene where it will be transacted. The extinction of a testimony for Christ, throughout all the other territories of the Roman earth, will be followed by its extinction in this land—so that, throughout Europe, the witnesses against the Man of Sin shall be “dead.” “If we are safe from the last war of the beast against the witnesses,” says a judicious American divine,* “where shall the blow fall? On what street, in what kingdom of the ancient empire, shall the witnesses of Jesus Christ lie dead and unburied, the sport of the sons of darkness? In what land are to be found the victims, the last victims, to be offered upon the altar of the man of sin? You anticipate my reply. There is one nation to which the eye is irresistibly turned. It is not a secret to the Christian world, in what country dwell the witnesses of our Redeemer, at the present time, in the greatest number, with the greatest zeal, intelligence, activity, and usefulness. There too, they are likely to continue in the greatest notoriety during the few years which remain of the time necessary for them to complete their testimony. It is painful, brethren, to anticipate this event. It embitters the heart.—Heavy are these tidings from the little book : but we must receive it out of the angel’s hand. Shall our

* Dr M’Leod.

fathers, our friends, our brethren in the faith of God's elect, bound with us in the most sacred ties, for the promotion of the Lord's cause, be opposed, and persecuted, and put to death in the British dominions?

"It is only a conjecture. We do not, we dare not predict. The place is not absolutely pointed out in the prophecy. We cannot be certain until the event declares what street of the great city—the old Roman empire, is to be the place of slaughter. The British empire is within the bounds of the symbolical earth. She is, at present, the principal support of the old Antichristian systems of Europe. She bears up the empire of the west, against the third and the last woe, now pouring out its plagues by the agency of revolutionary France. Should *that woe* be permitted in the providence of God to break over the cliffs of Albion, and its foaming billows roll along to the high mountains of Caledonia, where the old Roman legions were stopped in the days of other times, the war of the beast against the witnesses must become matter of history. The best of the saints, and the most magnanimous, intelligent, and faithful of that land, as they would not be silent, could not be safe.

"Men of no religion—men inclined to a splendid form without life or reality—the avowed enemies of evangelical doctrine—the high advocates of arbitrary power and prelatical pride—those who excommuni-

cate from the pale of the Church of God, all but themselves and the Church of Rome, would easily embrace the views of the Antichristian conqueror. But thousands among the several religious denominations of the British isles would seal their testimony with their blood.

“What is to prevent such a catastrophe? Britain, first in crime, because sinning against the clearest light, and the greatest mercies, deserves the scourge. Britain, possessing the most active, useful, and important part of the Church of God, will be preserved from wrath until the work assigned to her pious sons shall have been accomplished. Let that work be done, and then though Noah, and Daniel, and Job, were there, they cannot prevent the evil to come.”

Fondly, my brethren, would we hope, from regard to our beloved country, that this view of the event in question might prove to be incorrect. But whether the dismal transaction announced in the prediction referred to be past or not, I have in my own mind no doubt that times of suffering do yet await the Church, and that these isles of the sea will be made to partake largely of the bitter cup. There are several passages in this book which lead us to entertain such an apprehension;* and various considerations press themselves

* Particularly Rev. xiv. 17—20. See Culbertson's Commentary on that passage. Lect. xlix. and l.

on our notice which tend strongly to confirm it. Among the Churches of the Reformation, the interests of enlightened and stedfast piety do seem to be greatly on the decline. "An insidious liberality of sentiment, which confounds the eternal distinctions of truth and falsehood, has affected the great body of those who are called Protestants. They no longer view with abhorrence the blasphemy and idolatry of the Papal hierarchy, but consider them trifling errors—mere venial mistakes. Their profession is a mere name, and their external adherence to it the effect of habit and education." Their indifference to the discriminating tenets of their own religion predisposes them to yield readily to any other system which the voice of power may command them to embrace. On the other hand, notwithstanding the abridgment of the pontiff's temporal authority, the Popish interest has for many years evidently been gaining ground. In France, a Protestant Church of more than two thousand congregations, which was once an eminent part of the glory of the Reformation, is now almost extinct. In Germany, many princes, of families which were once distinguished for their attachment to Protestantism, have apostatized; and states—such as Bohemia and Hungary—which were formerly Protestant, have again fallen under the control of Catholicism. In Holland, multitudes of Protestants have fallen victims to the artifice and sophistry of the Jesuits. In Austria, the Palatinate, and Bavaria, this insidious and profligate

order has the control of almost all the seminaries for the instruction of youth ; and even in Sweden and Denmark, it has extensive influence. I grieve to be obliged to add to these notices, that, in our own beloved, covenanted land—the “ bulwark of the Reformation”—the interests of Popery have, within the last fifty years, experienced an astenishing revival.*

* “ In 1780,” says Dr Burns, stating in few words some of the melancholy facts on this subject, “ the number of Papists in England and Wales, according to the Parliamentary Return, was exactly 69,376. *Now*, it is understood to be at least 600,000 ! *Then*, there were only *three* public academical establishments of that persuasion in that country ; *now*, there are at least *fifty*. *Then*, there was no such thing as a *Catholic college*, or university, heard of in Britain ; *now*, the literary establishment at *Stonyhurst*, in Lancashire, comprises at least 500 professors and students ; has 1100 acres of the finest land in England attached to it ; has the town of *Preston*, and a great part of Lancashire, under Jesuitical influence ; while, within a quarter of a mile of it, stands a large elementary school for at least *one thousand* children. In 1780, the number of chapels in England and Wales, including those kept in the houses of peers and commoners, did not exceed 300 ; *now*, it is at least 1000, over and above private chaplainships. *Then*, the number of Priests was calculated at 366 ; *now*, it cannot be less than 1200, besides teachers in academies, and chaplains attached to the families of Catholic gentry. In the immediate vicinity of London is one *mass-house*, capable of containing 10,000 persons ; and, for the erection of this temple of Satan, the ‘ good city of London’ made a compliment of the ground !”

and that they are now about to obtain a high testimony of our national regard!—When, my brethren, in connexion with these facts respecting the declension of the Protestant, and the revival and increase of the Popish interest, I consider the inveterate malignity of that Spirit of darkness, whose opposition to our Lord Jesus has been mainly carried on, in New-Testament times, by means of the Antichristian system, and how unlikely it is, that he will abandon such a mighty stronghold of his visible kingdom without a last, fearful, and desperate struggle;—and, when I remember, besides, that all the signal revivals which the Church has enjoyed, during both her Old and New-Testament history, have been preceded by seasons of darkness and affliction, and that, by accomplishing her deliverances in this way, her Redeemer appears to have determined eminently to glorify his wisdom, and power, and grace, and signally to confound and triumph over his adversaries,—I am led to acquiesce in the sentiment of those who apprehend that times of trial are yet awaiting the Church—that the Antichristian interest will yet prove a terrible scourge to the nations of Europe—and that the cause of righteousness and truth will experience severe depression, before the period arrive when it shall be fully and permanently established.

But, without dwelling on these things—respecting which, as they refer to futurity, we must speak very imperfectly—I shall conclude the discourse by

reminding you, very briefly, of the duty which devolves on you as Christians and Protestants, in relation to this whole subject.

In the first place, my brethren, see to it that ye be Christians indeed. A pure *profession* of Christianity is, unquestionably, of great importance; but, if it is unaccompanied by religion in the *heart*, it avails nothing.—I beseech you, rest not satisfied till Christ be “formed in you”—till you be united to him by faith—justified before God through his divine righteousness—regenerated by his holy Spirit—and introduced to that blessed, spiritual life, which is the privilege of all his genuine people, and in the progress of which, imitating his example, enjoying fellowship with him in his sacred institutions, and instructed, and guided, and sanctified by his spirit, you will rise above the influence of this vain and sinful world, and be prepared, in due time, for entering into the glories and felicities of the perfect state.—Unacquainted, my brethren, with these realities of experimental and practical religion, the contemplation of the prophecies, in which we are engaged, will be to you a mere matter of cold and curious speculation, and the Bible itself, with all its rich and interesting revelations, will be “a sealed book.” Unacquainted with these realities of religion, you will neither be prepared for living to the glory of God, or dying in his favour. If an “hour of temptation” were to come on the churches, “to try

them that dwell upon the earth," you would soon abandon your profession, and make "shipwreck of faith and a good conscience." And if you were to live and die in this condition, you would have no prospect before you but the melancholy one of being gathered to the lost "souls in" the everlasting "prison."—Wherefore, my brethren, "give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." "Created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works," "washed, and justified, and sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," you will be fitted for promoting his glory in your respective spheres—for meeting him in the dispensations of his providence, how mysterious and trying soever they may be—and, in due time, for being "with Christ, which is far better."

Secondly,—Let your prayers rise for the final, glorious deliverance of Zion, and for the overthrow of her adversaries. If you are Christians indeed, you will not, you cannot, live without prayer. The prayerless person is a stranger to true godliness.—And, my brethren, when you bow your knees at the footstool of mercy to supplicate the blessings of salvation for yourselves, and your families, and your friends, forget not Zion. She is dear to your God as the purchase of the blood of his beloved son—his "rest"—the habitation of his "honour"—the scene where his chosen are prepared for heaven. In the

exercise of his sovereignty, and for her benefit, he has appointed for her seasons of darkness and suffering; but, at the same time, he has ordained for her seasons of light and of refreshing, and he has connected her deliverances, and her enlargement, and the overthrow of her adversaries, with the prayers of his people.—“For all these things,” he has said, “I will be enquired of by the house of Israel to do them for them.” Wherefore, “ye that are the Lord’s remembrancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” Say to him,—“Let thy kingdom come, let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” “Arise and have mercy on Zion; let the time to favour her come, even the set time.” “Let thine enemies be scattered, O Lord; let thine enemies perish: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at thy presence!”

And, my brethren, in pleading for the final ruin of the adversaries of the Lord Jesus, you act in entire accordance with the great rule of Christian charity. Your prayers do not respect the *persons* of your Redeemer’s enemies, but their *cause*. You seek not the destruction of individuals, but of the system which they support. And, far from entertaining or expressing hostility to *them*, your fervent supplications for the ruin of the system by which they are deluded and destroyed, are the truest expressions of tender and affectionate regard which you have it in your power to give.

In the third place,—Let it be your study to cherish a high and jealous regard for the glorious principle on which the Reformation was conducted and established.—I need not, surely, inform you what that principle is. You are aware that *implicit faith*—uninquiring subjection to the authority of the church—was the principle that lay at the foundation of all the unhallowed influence, and the proud dominion of Papal Rome.—In opposition to this degrading and ruinous principle, the Reformers were led in the progress, and as the ground of their generous and holy contentings for the spiritual liberties of mankind, to establish THE PERFECTION OF THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE RIGHT OF EVERY MAN TO READ AND EXAMINE IT FOR HIMSELF. This, my brethren, is the fundamental principle of the Reformation. Appealing from the tribunal of the Pope, from the decisions of councils, from the writings of the fathers, from the traditions of fallible and erring men, the Reformers took their station on the broad and firm basis of the Word of God. There they stood—there they called upon their fellow-men to stand. There they contended; and on that high vantage ground, under the blessing of God, did the Reformation gain its sublime and immortal triumphs.—*There*, my brethren, as true Protestants, let us stand! Embalming in our hearts the memory of that blessed revolution which rescued the bible from darkness, and set it open to the people of every land—let us

rejoice in the perfection and sufficiency of the holy word, and venerate and exercise the glorious and dearly vindicated right of searching it for ourselves. Let us scorn that blind and degrading subjection of our consciences to *authority*, which is the very essence of Popery, and, in all points of truth and duty, make a firm and unhesitating appeal from the dictates of man, to the unerring oracles of the living God. "To the law and to the testimony" be our venerated maxim—"if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—In short, in adopting and maintaining a peculiar profession of Christianity, let our conduct be the result—not of education merely, nor of compliance with the external circumstances in which we are placed—but of close and serious application to the Word of God; and, having found **THE TRUTH**, and being firmly persuaded in our own minds, "let us hold fast our profession,"—"following the Lamb through good and through bad report," and remembering his solemn assurance—"whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven: but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father, who is in heaven."*

Let me exhort you, moreover,—to Give your testimony, in every legitimate and scriptural way, against

* Mark x. 32, 33.

the errors and abominations of the Church of Rome. In the first place, testify against her, by exhibiting an intelligent and steadfast attachment to that profession of the reformed religion, which—from conviction, I trust—you have been led to embrace.—Testify against her, too, by exercising a holy jealousy over yourselves, lest, while you are Protestants in name, you should retain and display the *spirit* of Popery. You renounce images in your worship; but beware, at the same time, of the spiritual idolatry of the heart. You believe not, in the mediation of saints and angels; but, beware, lest you dishonour the *One* Mediator, by neglecting that improvement of his blessed offices, which is unto salvation. You repudiate the penances, mortifications, indulgences of Popery; but be jealous, lest in some secret way your own righteousness be the ground of your confidence before God. You exclude, from your confession, the Popish doctrine of baptismal regeneration; but, forget not, that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” You condemn the vain ceremonies of the Papal Church; but beware lest you yourselves take up your rest in “a form of godliness.” You reprobate the intolerant and sanguinary complexion of the Popish creed; but see that yourselves do not merit the censure incurred by the disciples of old time—“ye knew not what spirit ye are of.” While you denounce as unscriptural and fatally delusive the Popish doctrine of *extremis*

unction, beware lest, postponing care about your immortal interests to a future season, you neglect "the accepted time—the day of salvation," and come short of everlasting life. In short, my brethren, see to it, that the great doctrines of Protestantism be embodied in your own conduct, and that thus, on your part, a *practical* testimony be held forth before the world against the corruptions and idolatries of Rome. —Moreover, let me remind you, that in prosecuting a consistent and effective testimony against Popery, it is your imperative duty to separate yourselves from every association that countenances, directly, or indirectly, the corruption of the Word of God. Hoping, and longing, and praying, and believing in relation to the final overthrow of "the man of sin," far be it from you to "say a confederacy" with men whose measures have a tendency to prop up his throne and to extend his influence, by polluting with human errors and blasphemies the oracles of God!*—In fine my

* It will be obvious to every reader that there is reference here to the associations in this country that are in connexion with the British and Foreign Bible Society. This institution, although it has abandoned the direct printing and circulation of the Apocrypha, in which for many years it persevered, has settled itself down into correspondence with Apocryphal men, and Apocryphal societies on the Continent, and is, therefore, implicated with them in the fearful crime of adulterating the oracles of God. As a Protestant minister, under solemn obligations to point out to his people

brethren, let me beseech you, as a mean on your part, in the hand of God, for perpetuating in the Church a testimony for Christ, in opposition to the apostacies of Rome—to instruct your children, early and judiciously, respecting the evil character of the Popish doctrines, and the history, principles, and blessings of the Protestant Reformation. I am well aware that the careful and persevering instruction of the rising race in the doctrines of Christianity and the history of the Church, is a part of domestic piety which, in multitudes of families in this land, is extinct. But I am sure this is a state of matters most deeply to be deplored. I know that the times in which religious instruction was seriously regarded in her habitations, were the best times that Scotland has ever seen ; and it will not be well for her till these times return. It was an interesting sight to behold the head of a family, with his domestics around him, spending the hours of evening, especially the evening of Sabbath, in commending to them the great truths of Christianity—warming their young hearts with love to the Saviour—and rehearsing to

what he regards as the path of duty, he felt himself bound to tender the above-mentioned exhortation ; for it is his unhesitating conviction, that, until the British and Foreign Society shall, totally and for ever, abandon connexion with those by whom the Holy Scriptures are corrupted, it is inconsistent, and criminal in a high degree, for Protestants to give it their support.

them all the gracious dealings of God with his Church in Old and New-Testament times. And we know how richly, in the days when such scenes as this were common in our beloved land, the blessing of God descended on them. The youth thus diligently instructed, grew up a race of men famous in all the Protestant Churches for intelligence and religion—and, far from being “children, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, through the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness of them who lie in wait to deceive,” they became those established and vigorous Christians, who withstood the shock of many a persecution, and secured the freedom of the gospel for succeeding generations by the shedding of their blood. And, my brethren, unless a revival of these times and scenes be sent in mercy to our native land, what can be the result? If generation after generation pass away, and the youth be permitted, as to the great body of them, to grow up in utter ignorance of the principles of Christianity and the Reformation, and in utter indifference respecting the distinction between truth and error, what has the Church in our Protestant land to expect? What, but that judicious piety and firm principle will gradually perish, and the great body of the people be prepared for abandoning, without a struggle and without regret, all that has been our distinguishing glory, as a religious nation, for three hundred years? In your respective spheres, my brethren, if there be any regard for the glory of

God, any concern about the prosperity of the Church in future generations, any care about the immortal interests of your children, and your children's children,—hide not from them “the praises of the Lord, his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.” Tell them of “the testimony” which he “established in Jacob,” and “the law” he “appointed in Israel.” Teach them these things in your “lying down, and rising up, your going out, and coming in”—“that the generation to come may know them,” and “set their hope in God”—“that race unto race may praise his name and show forth his mighty deeds.”

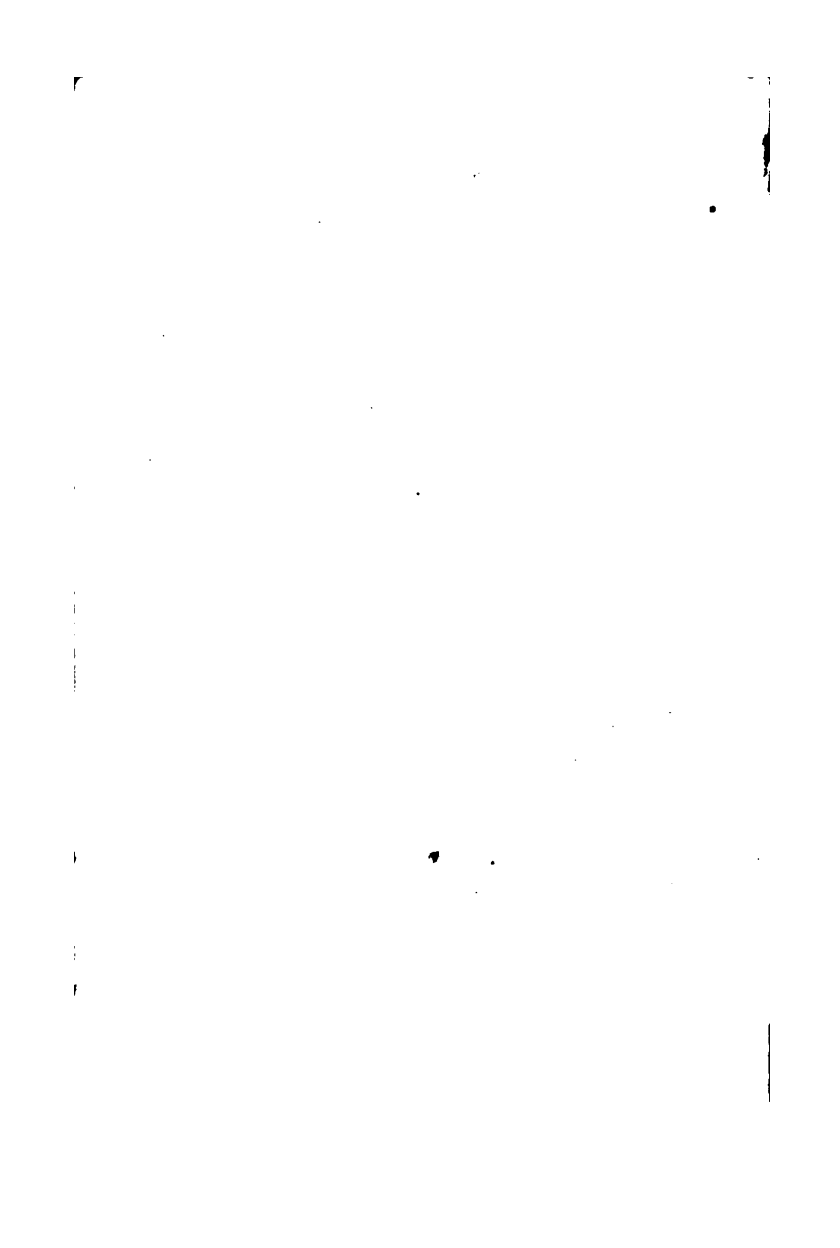
Again, let me exhort you to give your countenance and your aid, according to your ability, to those associations that are labouring, in a scriptural manner, to disseminate the knowledge of the everlasting gospel among mankind. They are promoting, generally, the glory of Christ, and the extension of his Church. They are giving fulfilment to the ancient prediction that in the latter days “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” They are the means which we are led to conceive the Lord will bless for gathering his own people out of Mystical Babylon. And, although the reflection is a melancholy one, for any thing we can tell, they may be preparing receptacles for the truth of Christ, and professors of his name in far distant lands, to be to him

“ for a joy and a praise,” when, in punishment of the favoured but ungodly nations of Christendom, their “ candlestick” may be “ removed out of its place.”

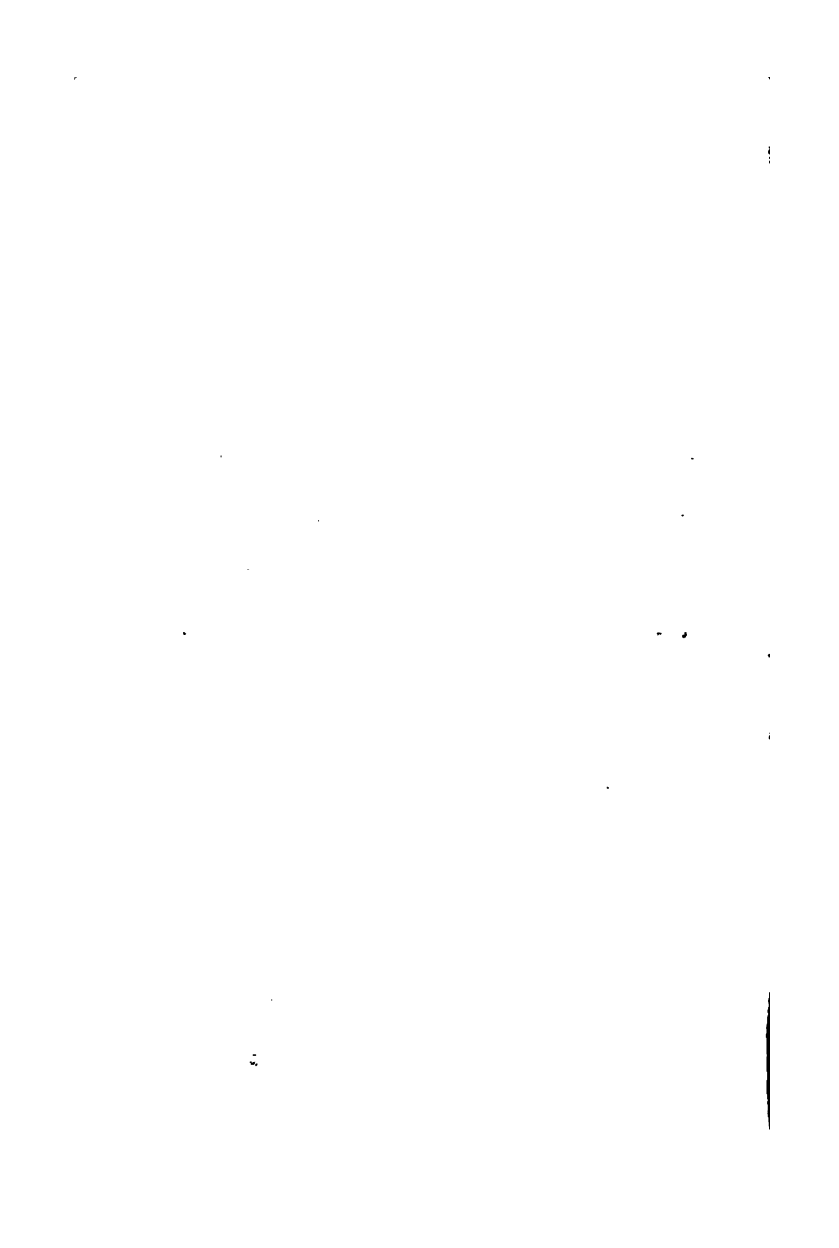
In conclusion, my brethren, let us live and die in the joyful belief, that good days are in store for the Church. “ The words are,” indeed, “ closed up, and sealed, till the time of the end.” It will not be, till the prophetic announcements respecting the Church, shall have received their accomplishment, that their import will be fully and clearly unfolded. Till then, the providential administration of Christ towards the Church will be involved in mystery. But, let us “ go our way, till the end be.” Let us engage and persevere till death in the work and service of the Lord,—assured that, whatever dark and troublous scenes the Church may be called to pass through, her tribulations will, in the end, have a glorious issue.—We, indeed, will not behold it. Long ere that time, we will be “ gathered to our fathers ;” and, while the revolutions necessary for the fulfilment of prophecy are going on, we will be sleeping in the dust. But it will come. At length, the mystery of providence will be unravelled. At length, there will be achieved in the earth, that great triumph of righteousness and truth, which will vindicate the moral government of God—overthrow Satan’s Antichristian, Infidel, Mahomedan, and Heathen Kingdoms—and introduce a period of Christian union, peace, purity, and joy, which will be the jubilee of the world ; and a bright

anticipation of "the times of the restitution of all things."—"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"—And, in that day, may our "lot" be among the blessed company on high, who will rejoice in the deliverance of the Militant Church, and from whom will be heard the sublime announcement—"The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."





APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

No. I.—See page 24.

THE conduct of the Church of Rome, in relation to the second commandment, stamps on her worship the awful character of wilful idolatry. The prohibition of images in that divine precept is most express:—"Thou shalt not *make* unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth, thou shalt not *bow down thyself* to them, nor serve them."—It was absolutely necessary, either that the worship of images should be given up, or that the divine law which forbids it should be concealed. For, even in the darkest ages of Popery, the thinking and reasoning faculty of mankind was not quite extinct. The priests, as Mr M'Gavin remarks, could not inscribe the words of the second commandment on the wall behind the altar, and then lay down upon the altar an image or crucifix to be worshipped. They could not insert the same words in any of their catechisms for the instruction of the people, and then exhort them to come and pay their devotions before an image of the Virgin Mary. Accordingly, they proceeded the dreadful length of mutilating the holy law of God, in all the catechisms and formularies of the Church. They expunged the second from the number of the commandments; and, in

order to make up the deficiency thus occasioned, divided the tenth into two. Thus mutilated, the ten commandments are in these words :—

“ Q. Say the ten commandments of God.

- A. 1. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no strange gods before me.
 2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 3. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
 4. Honour thy father and mother.
 5. Thou shalt not kill.
 6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
 7. Thou shalt not steal.
 8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
 9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.
 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.”—

Exod. xx.

In this mutilated condition did the law of God remain in all the catechisms of the Papal Church till the period of the Reformation. On the spreading abroad of its light throughout Europe, however, the villany of the priesthood was exposed; and, in consequence of the controversy with the Protestant Churches, they found themselves obliged to make some alteration or other on the formularies of the Church. Accordingly, first of all, they introduced into some of their catechisms the second commandment, as part of the first, changing, however, some of its expressions, in the following manner :—

“ Q. Say the first commandment.

“ A. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no strange Gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven thing, nor the likeness of any

thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, thou shalt not *adore* nor worship them. I am the Lord thy God, strong and jealous, visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousands of those that love me and keep my commandments."

Another alteration in the Roman catechisms, eminently illustrative of the base cunning of the priesthood, took place at the time of the Council of Trent. It was urged in that Council, as an unanswerable objection to the division of the tenth commandment into two—which had previously been practised in the formularies of the Church—that, in the second edition of the commandments, Deuteronomy v. the arrangement of the tenth is different from that of Exodus xx. In the one case it reads—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's *house*, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's *wife*;" in the other, "Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's *wife*, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's *house*:" and thus, according to the Popish arrangement, what was the ninth commandment in the one passage, would be the tenth in the other. The detection of this inconsistency confounded the Council; but, instead of yielding to the force of truth, and restoring the Law of God to its just arrangement, in order to conceal the impious fraud, they devised the miserable expedient of blending together the two clauses, which, in the former catechisms, had constituted the pretended ninth and tenth commandments, under the one united title of "The ninth and tenth commandments;"—and this, though they were not able to point out which was the ninth, and which was the tenth! Thus they stand in the Douay Catechism (the best in the Church of Rome) to this day—"The ninth and tenth commandments."

Q. Say the ninth and tenth.

No. III.—*See page 37.*

It was the design of the writer, under this head, to enter, somewhat more fully than he has done in the Discourses, into the evidence, that, in point of doctrine and spirit, Popery is the same in the nineteenth as in the sixteenth century. In consequence of the preceding part of this small volume having exceeded the limits he intended, he can only find room for one or two brief notices on the subject.—It is, obviously, not the private and unauthorised productions of any member of the Roman Church, that can be quoted with fairness as an exhibition of her principles. The writings to which we appeal in this matter must have the authority of the Church.

The Rev. Peter Gandolphy, referred to in page 22 of this volume, went to Rome, in 1815, with a work in 4 volumes, which he designed to publish as an exhibition of the principles of the Catholic Church. His book was read by the highest “authorities” at Rome—sanctioned by them in terms of the most unqualified approbation—and declared to be “worthy of being cased in cedar and gold.” In short, it is a book of *decisive authority*, as to the present character of the Catholic faith; for it appears under the highest official sanction of the Catholic Church. In this work we find such statements as the following regarding the Papal principles:—

OF GENERAL COUNCILS.—“Every Catholic regards their decision upon any controverted article of faith “*as the voice of God*; and, mindful of the warning of the divine Saviour—‘he that despiseth you, despiseth me’—as far as his religion is concerned, in humility *submits to be directed by them.*”—Again, “a Catholic finds not more difficulty in assenting to any truth she (that is, the Church, through her General Councils) proposes to him as an article of faith,

thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, thou shalt not *adore* nor worship them. I am the Lord thy God, strong and jealous, visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousands of those that love me and keep my commandments."

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A. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods."

I must add, in conclusion of this note, that, although the Reformation has forced such changes as these on the Church of Rome, it is only in the more enlightened parts of Catholic Christendom that she has permitted them to take place. *There*, she saw it would be impossible, after the Reformation had taken place, to keep the people in the ignorance of the dark ages; and, therefore, with the artful policy that has ever marked her proceedings, she has *there* reluctantly admitted a small portion of light into her formularies. But in Ireland, and the other benighted parts of Europe, she has acted differently. No ray of light has been permitted to enter there. It is to this moment carefully excluded. In the catechisms which she puts into the hands of her votaries, the second commandment, in any shape, is not to be found; the holy law of God is given in the mutilated form above recorded, and every trace of a divine precept against the worship of images is carefully obliterated.

No. II.—See page 34.

On the immoral character and influence of the Papal doctrines, the following are the recorded sentiments of one of the most intelligent and judicious divines of the present age. "The baseless and fanciful distinctions between *mortal* and *venial* sins—the doctrine of regeneration by the *opus operatum* of *baptism*—the system of dispensations and indulgences—the practice of auricular confession to the priest—the power of absolution entrusted to the discretion of a capricious individual—the injunction of celibacy on the clergy, who in all Catholic countries constitute a very large propor-

tion of the inhabitants—these, and various other features in the character of the Roman Catholic system, must, in the estimation of every impartial, moral observer, stamp it with the stigma of immorality and licentiousness. Indeed, the direct tendency of the Catholic system is, to apologize for sins of the deepest dye, and to substitute a religion of show and ceremony, in place of the genuine religion of the conscience and the heart. Transgressions against the law of *God* it allows to pass with a very slight censure; while transgressions against the institutions of *the Church*, or the rights of its ministers, are visited with the severest ecclesiastical censures. And hence we find that a marked and visible difference has all along been observed between the moral state of the continental nations, according as they possessed the Catholic or the Protestant religion. I speak, of course, with respect to those countries where the doctrines and institutions of the Reformation have retained somewhat of their native purity.” “There are many professors among us who lose sight of this matter (the *immoral* and *irreligious* character of the Catholic tenets)—who consider the tenets and superstitions of the Catholic Church as *harmless*—and who practically renounce *their own* peculiarities, as at most useless speculations. THIS IS ONE OF THE GROWING CORRUPTIONS OF THE PRESENT DAY; AND TO THIS UNDUE IMPRESSION IN FAVOUR OF POPYRY, MAY BE JUSTLY ASCRIBED THE STOICAL INDIFFERENCE OF MULTITUDES TO THOSE PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH THEIR FOREFATHERS SUFFERED AND DIED. When once we cease to believe that the peculiarities of Popery operate with a blasting and deadly influence on the great interests of Christian truth and practical morality, it will be a matter of no great consequence what name or profession we assume.”—*Burns' Letter to Dr Chalmers.*

No. III.—*See page 37.*

It was the design of the writer, under this head, to enter, somewhat more fully than he has done in the Discourses, into the evidence, that, in point of doctrine and spirit, Popery is the same in the nineteenth as in the sixteenth century. In consequence of the preceding part of this small volume having exceeded the limits he intended, he can only find room for one or two brief notices on the subject.—It is, obviously, not the private and unauthorised productions of any member of the Roman Church, that can be quoted with fairness as an exhibition of her principles. The writings to which we appeal in this matter must have the authority of the Church.

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than he would in admitting *the oral testimony of God himself!*—This is implicit submission with a vengeance, and, moreover, dreadful indignity against God, and his holy Word!

The following is the mandate of *one* of those Councils whose decision “every Catholic regards as the voice of God:”—“If any be found, by the competent ecclesiastical judge, only *marked, or suspected of heresy*—unless, according to the ground of the suspicion, or the quality of the person, they can show their innocence, to the *satisfaction of the judge*, and can *canonically* clear themselves, or if they refuse obstinately to clear themselves by oath—they are to be *condemned as heretics.*” A practical exemplification of the import of this decree was given, soon after its enactment, by the same Council—in the perfidious condemnation and martyrdom of John Huss and Jerome of Prague.

OF HERESY.—“The crime of heresy is a contumacious opposition to the *authority of the Church* in some points of doctrine.”—“If we may be permitted to judge of the enormity of a crime from its consequences, there is none before heaven of a *blacker die than heresy.*”—“Until the Reformation, the Church of England was a limb of the *true vine*, and, abiding in it, brought forth much fruit. She shot her branches into every corner of these islands, and every cluster gave delight to the husbandman, because he saw that it was his own vine, the vine that he had planted: but having been once severed by the destructive hand of schism, with a hateful eye he now views the sickly sprouts which issue from its fallen, crushed, and broken branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so *this* shall wither, and they shall gather it up, and cast it into the *fire*, and it shall *burn.*”

FORCIBLE SUPPRESSION OF HERESY.—"Writers have noticed the great diminution of heresies, since the *temporal* authority of the Popes became more settled and extended. The fact is, that *heresy* is usually the burst of some turbulent mind,* that CAN ONLY BE CONTROLLED BY FORCE; and, therefore, when the *civil* authority acts not with the spiritual, it is often difficult to prevent or to suppress the evil;—the dogmatizer of heresy might be at liberty to pass from one diocese to another, scattering his poisonous cockle in every direction."—"Italy, Spain, and Portugal, are the only countries where THE INQUISITION is found, in which countries there are none but Catholics. Now, when we consider the great advantage of one religion to a state; when we reflect on the broils, wars, and disturbances, occasioned by a community divided into sects,—we cannot be surprised, that the governments of these countries should endeavour to protect what they know to be so beneficial. And if other countries refuse to follow their example, it is only because they are not so fortunately circumstanced in this regard!"—So the "infernal tribunal" is still approved at Rome, and the suppression of heresy by force, when circumstances permit, is still an article of the Papal creed.

OF INDULGENCES.—"All the good works of the just have a double value in the sight of God—one of merit, the other of satisfaction; that is, one giving a title to recompense hereafter, the other constituting an equivalent for the temporal punishment of sin.—As the satisfaction arising out of the good works of the Saints far exceeds their temporal debt, to the justice of God, it becomes a *balance in favour of the*

* Such minds, for example, as Waldo, Wickliffe, Luther, Calvin, Knox, &c.

Church, which, through the infinite mercies of Jesus Christ, she is warranted to apply to the exigencies of her other children.—This treasure, derived from the virtues of the Saints, through the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, forms an *inexhaustible stock of satisfaction*, which the Church and the Chief Pastor are empowered to apply to the general advantage of the faithful."

THE CATHOLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH.—This document commonly termed the Creed of Pope Pius IV. consists of twenty-five articles, to which every Roman Catholic vows allegiance. It recognises the whole doctrines of Popery, as they were laid down and explained by the Councils of the Church. Its two concluding articles are in these words—"I likewise undoubtedly receive and promise *all* things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent; and I condemn, reject, and anathematize, all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized. I do at this time freely profess, and sincerely hold *this true Catholic faith, without which no one can be saved*. And I promise most constantly to retain, and confess the same entire and inviolate, with God's assistance, to the end of my life."

Such is Popery in the nineteenth century;—unchanged in her doctrines—unsoftened in her spirit! The same inveterate hostility does she breathe against Protestants, as in the times of the Reformation. Against them she still shuts the gates of Heaven; and were it in her power, with the terrors of the sword, the inquisition, and the stake, would she again endeavour to gather them within her pale!

No. IV.—*See page 42.*

In the “Encyclical Letter of Leo XII.” addressed to the clergy of the Catholic Church,—a document published so recently as 1824—there are the following injunctions on this subject.—“You are aware, venerable brethren, that a certain society, commonly called the Bible Society, strolls with effrontery throughout the world; which Society contemning the traditions of the Holy Fathers, and contrary to the well-known decree of the Council of Trent, labours with all its might, and by every means, to translate—or rather to pervert the Holy Bible into the vulgar languages of every nation, from which proceeding it is greatly to be feared, that by a perverse interpretation, the gospel of Christ be turned into a human gospel, or what is still worse, into the gospel of the devil!—We also, venerable brethren, in conformity with our apostolic duty, exhort you to turn away your flock from these poisonous pastures. Reprove, beseech, be instant in season and out of season, that the faithful entrusted to you, be persuaded, that, if the Sacred Scriptures be every where indiscriminately published, more evil than advantage will arise thence, on account of the rashness of men.”—Such is the doctrine of the Papal Church at this day in relation to the general dissemination and study of the Holy Word. She “hates the light,” and her poor, abused disciples must not come to it, lest her “deeds should be made manifest.” Would that they were brought to perceive how utterly opposed *her* decision respecting the Divine Word is to the injunction of our blessed Lord and Saviour—“search the scriptures—they testify of me!”—John v. 39.

No. V.—*See page 43, also, pp. 63, and 140.*

I cannot help, in this place, expressing my regret, when I think of the unhappy bearing which the proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society have had on the interests of Popery throughout the Continent of Europe. Often, in former years, have I thought of the institution of that Society with delight. I have rejoiced in its progress—and imagined that the finger of providence marked it out as one of the great instruments to be employed in accomplishing the world's regeneration. I have been gratified to contemplate its peaceful triumphs in *heathen* lands,—but especially have I been delighted to observe the inroads which I conceived it to be making on the dreary territories of “the Man of Sin.” The Word of God has assured us that the power of this great deceiver shall be overthrown; and, while it has told us that his overthrow will be accomplished amid the judicial inflictions of God's displeasure, it has told us at the same time that it will be mainly promoted by the dissemination of divine truth. Much, therefore, in common with all my fellow Protestants, have I rejoiced in the extension of the operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society to Popish lands, and very sanguine expectations have I been accustomed to indulge respecting the success of its labours of love among their ignorant and deluded people. Thus feeling, and thus anticipating, it has been with regret of the most poignant kind, that I have contemplated the disclosures that have recently taken place respecting the proceedings of this great institution,—and have been compelled to believe, that, in violation of its fundamental principle, it has, during a series of years, given its countenance to the circulation in Popish lands of the falsehoods and blasphemies of the Apocrypha—mixed up with, and under the character of the Oracles of the living God.

These transactions are lamentable, whether they be viewed in their bearing on the glory of God, the purity of his word or the spiritual interests of mankind.—My subject leads me particularly to deplore their bearing on the condition of the members of the Roman Church. To *their* conversion from their ruinous errors, the proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society have unquestionably opposed a very powerful barrier;—in as much as they have stamped with the sanction of Protestant regard a book, whose revsries constitute the foundation of some of the chief absurdities and blasphemous doctrines of the Papal system, and on behalf of whose canonical character, the authority of the last council of the Papal Church was impiously interposed. That the God of the Scriptures will overrule these unhallowed transactions for ultimate good to his own cause, we cannot doubt, but that they are in the mean time, in their own nature evil, calculated to injure the interest of Protestantism, and to strengthen, in the votaries of Popery, their attachment to their own idolatrous and destructive system—is a melancholy truth. Awful is the responsibility that rests on the directors of the British and Foreign Society; and most solemn are the obligations that devolve upon them, in relation to this matter, to retrace their steps—to undo as far that is possible, the momentous evil which they have committed—to send abroad, as widely as the moral poison was circulated through their instrumentality, an antidote to that poison—and henceforth, with a firmness of resolution becoming the servants of Jesus Christ, to break off from the remotest connexion with those, who, either in an individual or associated character, are doing injury to the cause of God by corrupting the purity of his Holy Word. If this be done—and not till this is done—we may hope, that the cloud which has gathered over this great institution will be dispelled, and

that it will deservedly occupy the place, which, in the universal estimation of Protestants, it formerly possessed.

No. VI.—*See page 106.*

It is not unworthy of our notice, that there are natural causes already in operation, by which, for any thing we can tell, this tremendous change in the condition of the great Papal City may be accomplished. It appears that an insalubrious constitution of the atmosphere exists in various parts of Italy. Formerly, in the times of ancient Rome, the insalubrity was confined to a few spots; but it has been increasing and extending with the lapse of ages, until now, not only has the country in the neighbourhood of Rome become uninhabitable, but the pestilential air has begun to affect the city itself. During the summer, the country around Rome is so insalubrious, that the shepherds and their flocks come every night to take shelter within the walls, as the only means of avoiding the danger to which they would be exposed by passing the night in the country.—The consequence of all this is, that the country around Rome, which, in ancient times, was extremely populous, is now almost a wilderness without inhabitants, while, at the same time, the population of the great city itself is diminishing.—In the year 1781, the inhabitants of Rome were estimated at 166,000; in 1813, their number did not exceed 100,000. In part, perhaps, this extraordinary diminution in twenty-one years, is to be attributed to the revolutions which Rome experienced during that period, but intelligent travellers regard it as chiefly owing to the increased action of the *malaria*, which appears to be investing the city on every side.

These are facts eminently interesting to the student of divine prophecy: And, although the philosophers of this world may look no farther than second causes in attempting to account for them—the Christian, who reads in his bible the threatenings of God against mystical Babylon, and waits and longs for their accomplishment, as the harbingers of the peace and glory which the Church is to enjoy in the latter days—cannot fail to recognize in them the commencement of those plagues whereby Antichristian Rome shall be utterly destroyed.—See *Cunningham's "Apostacy of the Church of Rome,"* p. 162—and the *Edinburgh Review* for September 1817, there quoted.

FINIS.



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“ The effects of the Reformation from Popery, treated of in the Publication under review, must surely be an interesting and important subject of investigation.” “ We recommend Mr. Mackray's Essay to every one who is desirous of gaining a full and correct knowledge of the benefits produced by the Reformation on Civil Society. It is characterized throughout by profound research, by ingenious and skilful reasoning, and by lively and pleasing illustration.”—“ We consider that Mr. Mackray has conferred a high obligation on the public in his publication of this Essay. He has directed our attention to the Reformation in a light in which it is

seldom considered—has assisted to embalm the memory of the departed mighty—and has presented the Church of “the Apostacy” in such a light, that even the professed irreligious must regard it as the enemy of man.”—*Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, Nov. 1829.

“ It is to the Reformation that we are indebted for the privileges by which we are distinguished, and for the rank which we have attained among the nations of the earth.”—“ It is in this light, and as the palladium of our national liberties, that the Author before us has viewed the subject. Conceiving that most of those who had written on the history and influence of the Reformation, have too much regarded it as merely a revolution in Theology, he proposes to consider its effects on the civil and political affairs of mankind.”—“ In publishing his Essay, we think he has conferred credit on himself, and a benefit on the cause of the Reformation.—The views which the Author takes of the evils of Popery, and of the ignorance, vice, and misery, which uniformly attend it, are clear and distinct; and contrasting them with the advantages, both civil and domestic, that have flown from the Reformation, he takes occasion to point out the obligations under which we lie to our glorious revolution, and the great men by whom it was promoted.”—“ We must conclude by giving our warm recommendation of the Essay.”—*Edinburgh Evening Post*, April 4, 1829.

